THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

Volume XX — New York, Friday, June 15, 1934 — Number 7

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Previous issues of THE COMMONWEAL are indexed in the *Readers' Guide* and the *Catholic Periodical Index*

Published weekly and copyrighted, 1934, in the United States by the Calvert Publishing Corporation, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y. United States: $5.00; Foreign: $6.00; Canada: $5.50; Single Copies: $.10.

HUMPTY DUMPTY'S FALL

THERE was a time, not so long ago, when one of the most popular and powerful arguments advanced against the Catholic religion, in English-speaking countries particularly, and in the industrialized countries of Europe, such as Germany and Holland, was that all the rich, progressive and powerful nations were mainly Protestant in religion, while all the poor, weak, backward and decadent nations were mainly Catholic. Nor was this phenomenon considered to be merely accidental. On the contrary, the prosperity, imperialism and general triumphant progress of the industrialized peoples were attributed to the vigorous individualism produced and encouraged by the teachings of Protestantism. In fact, the extreme form of this opinion claimed that the wealth and power and progress, etc., were the rewards obviously and properly bestowed by Providence upon the enlightened children of the Reformation. On the other hand, Catholicism, so the argument ran, bred backward, idle, superstitious peoples, who not only were incapable of developing the innate wealth of their respective countries and colonies, but were unable even to hold on to what they already possessed. The latter portion of this argument provided grounds for a highly practical development of the thesis, namely, that it would be desirable, indeed, it would be righteous, for the big, rich, respectable and powerful peoples to take over the sinfully neglected opportunities of the backward peoples and turn them to a good account.

This indictment of Catholicism deeply distressed many Catholics. While few Catholics could go so far as to embrace the extreme doctrine that wealth and worldly power were infallible proofs of Divine approval, and still remain Catholics, yet there were many who were convinced that Catholics, especially those living in the Catholic countries, were handicapped by their allegiance to other-worldly principles, and were lamentably blind to the obvious blessings of *laissez-faire*, big business and unrestricted capitalism. It is more than probable, indeed, that this argument was more responsible than any other cause for the leakage from the Catholic Church in all industrial countries, among what used to be termed "the more successful classes."

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But this great argument is now a Humpty Dumpty that has fallen with a crash, and lies in pieces, and not all the King's horses, nor all the King's men can ever set Humpty Dumpty up again. However, an effort is now rather belatedly being made to prove that this Humpty Dumpty of an idol was really not the creation of Protestantism, but, rather, of Catholicism—or, anyhow, of Jesuitism. The Jesuits, once more, have been trotted forward as the enemies of mankind, by foisting upon the world a false ideal which led to social destruction, and doing it so cleverly that the blame fell upon poor, innocent Puritan Protestants when the falsity of the idol at last became apparent. Well, the Jesuits are admittedly clever people—but it is hard to credit them with quite so much cleverness as all that.

At any rate, Dr. H. M. Robertson, senior lecturer in economics in the University of Capetown, South Africa, has issued through the Cambridge University Press a volume dealing with "Aspects of the Rise of Economic Individualism," one of the series of Cambridge Studies in Economic History, in which he strives mightily to remove from Puritanism the reproach, that once was its glory, of being the spiritual creator of modern capitalism, and to transfer the stigma to the casuists of the Jesuit order. He has been answered by Father Joseph Brodrick, S. J., in a volume entitled, "The Economic Morals of the Jesuits," issued by the Oxford University Press. This new battle of the books will, we believe, in due time emerge from the cloisters of the schools and become a very live issue in the open forum of public opinion. We hope to review both books in THE COMMONWEAL. Until then, we may leave the controversy, so far as it concerns the particular issue of Jesuit responsibility, in the very capable hands of Father Brodrick, who, it seems to us, has very clearly refuted Dr. Robertson's anti-Jesuit thesis.

Our present interest in the matter is the proof supplied by the Robertson book of the abandonment by the best Protestant thought of the former belief in the Humpty Dumpty of Divine blessing upon economic individualism. As a writer in the London *Tablet* points out, even if Dr. Robertson had succeeded in proving his anti-Jesuit allegations (which Father Brodrick clearly shows he has not done), his own pages prove that the Holy Office, the authoritative mouthpiece of the Church, was consistently opposed to the new financial practises which were the object of so much bitter controversy as the new industrial era began.

It was the work of Max Weber, a German economist, which most firmly supported the thesis that the modern capitalist spirit, or, to quote Father Brodrick, "in other words, the pursuit of gain as a principle of conduct," is the product of Protestantism, chiefly in its English Puritan form. R. H. Tawney, the English economist, partly supported the same view, in his very influential book on "Religion and the Rise of Capitalism"; for while he denied that the capitalist spirit was the direct "offspring of Puritanism," he asserted that "Puritanism in its later phases added a halo of ethical sanctification to the appeal of economic expediency and offered a moral creed in which the duties of religion and the calls of business ended their long estrangement in an unanticipated reconciliation." And Tawney quoted from a pamphlet that was a characteristic expression of the early Puritan ethos. "There is," it said, "a kind of natural unaptness in the Popish religion to business, whereas on the contrary, among the Reformed, the greater their zeal, the greater their inclination to trade and industry, as holding idleness unlawful. . . . The domestic interest of England lieth in the advancement of trade both in the city and country, and providing such laws as may help it and make it most easy, especially in giving liberty of conscience to all Protestant Nonconformists, and deny it to Papists."

What that writer of 1671, and all the other leaders of early Puritanism, would make of their spiritual descendants of today, is a curious question. When the dominant economic views of the Protestant churches in the United States, as expressed through the utterances of the Federal Council of Churches, are set beside the doctrines which formerly glorified the acquisitive spirit, it is clear that a great body of modern Protestantism is united with modern Catholicism in repudiating the fallen Humpty Dumpty, and is engaged, as Catholics are engaged, in seeking the restoration of moral principles to their true position of being the guide, not the perverted servant of, a new economic system which will serve mankind and cease to be mankind's tyrant.

WEEK BY WEEK

The Trend of Events

FOR THE active nation dulness and some disillusionment were major characteristics of the past seven days. The inevitable ingredient called politics has begun to be recognizable in the dish served up as national reform. There can no longer be any doubt that a good deal of what purports to be "investigation" and "report" is merely somebody's excuse for attracting attention or airing a pet whimsy. The Darrow report was one instance; it would be easy to list a dozen others. In short, the sane and valuable notion of planning is in some real danger of getting lost among impractical and sometimes ridiculous sketches by professional amateurs. Small wonder that business improvement, upon which all orderly economic progress must ultimately depend, is being visibly halted by uncertainty and a rising tide of disgust! On the

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other hand, the advantages of the NRA and the A.A.A., as originally conceived, were perhaps never more fully demonstrated than during the past few days. It was possible for General Johnson to ward off a perilous and utterly wasteful textile strike, and the partial liberalization of some codes has been all to the good. Indeed, so far as we are concerned, the General seems emphatically worthy of endorsement. Similarly, the machinery established by the administration is commendably adequate to deal with so grave and menacing a situation as that brought on by the Western drought. Were it not for a hardening crust of flap-doodle, the nation might look forward a great deal more optimistically than it has looked recently. The Middle Western dry-spell—which affects also large areas in the North and Southwest—is a calamity no one can take too seriously. Nearly four rainless months have turned prosperous countrysides into something very like a desert. One must avoid estimating the result purely in terms of economic figures. True enough, the grain crop has shrunk at the rate of millions of bushels a day, fodder for livestock is often exhausted, and a shortage of water exposes whole states to the perils of fire and thirst. But the psychological effect, in times like these, is quite as important. Last autumn farmers experienced some decided improvement for the first time in years. Rising prices reawakened dimming hopes and enabled thousands of families to make purchases. It was really a step toward recovery—quite specifically, the recovery of morale. The present harrowing experience is a hard blow at confidence. Watching crops disappear before the onslaughts of nature is always a sore trial. Just now, however, it can easily become for many the prelude to despair. That is why the measures taken by the national government deserve the endorsement of every citizen. Failure here would endanger everything.

War Debts

WHEN this issue of THE COMMONWEAL appears, England's total suspension of her war-debt payments under the debt-funding agreements will be a *fait accompli*. While there may be some reactions here of hot-headed and emotional, rather than rational, resentment, we believe that thoughtful persons on the whole will feel that a step forward has been made, that trying, unsatisfactory and irritating half-measures have been abandoned and that a settlement that is a settlement will now be necessary. This of course may be only a pious hope on our part and a clean-cut and definite solution still hard to find. The present impasse may only lead to endless bickerings and disturbing uncertainties, no better or even worse than the long train of events in the past. But we do not think it will. We can find ourselves thankful for the very intransigence of the Johnson Act which President Roosevelt interpreted as removing from him the responsibility of accepting token payments, which in fact were anomalous transactions, satisfying and settling nothing or no one. Under the Johnson Act he would not be able to accept such payments as clearing England, and the six other European nations following England's example, of the disabilities attendant upon default provided for in the act. Elsewhere in this issue, THE COMMONWEAL is privileged to publish a practical suggestion for a solution of the dilemma of the debts by Henry Carter, who for seven years has been with our Department of State and is a close and realistic student of international relations.

Is Repeal a Benefit?

SOCIAL, moral and economic gains all along the line have ben reported by the county alcoholic beverage control boards in New York State. This news was in answer to a questionnaire sent out by the State Alcoholic Beverage Control Board. Certainly some degree of the optimism of the reports may be discounted as wishfulness by the persons entrusted with the jobs of achieving such improvements in the uses of alcoholic drinks since repeal. But to dismiss the whole thing would be egregious cynicism and such faithlessness in the approximate fairness of human nature and the perfectibility of human institutions that we could only despair and do nothing. The questionnaire inquired, "What have been the effects of repeal and the legalization of beer? Have the economic gains continued? Do you believe there have been social benefits?" Mrs. John S. Sheppard summed up as follows: "It is interesting to note from the replies that many of the hopes of the repealists have been fulfilled, even in the short time since the sale of alcoholic beverages has been legalized. There is testimony showing a decrease in drinking, especially among the young, and a decrease in the emphasis laid on drinking which was such a distressing feature of prohibition. The speakeasy seems to be practically eliminated and the bootlegger partially done away with." All the county boards reported gains in business and employment. Restaurants, hotels, real estate, supply houses and manufactories of accessories and supplies for the trade, were businesses benefited. Less gin and more beer was being drunk, it was disclosed, drinkers were not "congregating in hide-outs" and hip flasks were no longer "a popular high-school custom" nor conspicuous at or after dances. A number of county boards echoed the suggestion of Mr. Choate, the national supervisor of the traffic, that taxes should be lowered to enable legal liquor dealers to compete with the prices of the bootleggers. With almost any measures to eliminate the bootlegger, we are heartily in accord.

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The Latest in Mexico

IT IS a paradox, no doubt, that some of the most intolerable things done in the various wars upon religion, are not necessarily the worst things done. It was worse, for instance, for the king's men in the English Reformation to stab a brave abbot who held out against them, and throw his body into the abbey well, than for other reformers to cast down a statue of Our Lady, or kick a crucifix to pieces. And yet even the base murder revolts the imagination less than the mean and ugly fanaticism. It may be because there seems something more honest, at any rate, in striking out mortally against a foe than in wreaking hatred upon the symbols that are dear to him. Or it may be because the contemplation of martyrdom exalts us, relegating even the crime against the martyr to second place in our thoughts, while these lesser inhumanities call attention only to themselves. So, today, Mexico has had her martyrs for the Faith, and their murder is a dark and ineffaceable fact. But their glory is a fact, as well. Whereas there seems nothing to dilute or balance the deformed tyranny of the type of edict—and there have been many examples of it in Mexico—just proclaimed in the state of Tabasco. Gravestones have been abolished there in all cemeteries, under severe penalties. None is to be erected from now on; those now standing are to be removed. "Hereafter," concludes the press dispatch, "only a mound of earth is to indicate where a body lies." There are to be no crosses over the bodies destined to rise again by the might of the Cross. The belief in our victory over death and in God's everlasting and sustaining love, is to be engraven no more for the eyes of all men to see. The proud profession which Christian instinct has led man to make at the hour and in the place of mortality, the profession of his eternal destiny and immortal worth, is to be interdicted. And all this is done in the name of human liberty and the rights of man. It is not the first time that this grotesque and pitiful comedy has been attempted, and like all the other attempts, this too, of course, is destined to fail. Do despots never read history?

To the Young Idea

LOOKING over the season's crop of commencement addresses, one is struck by the general and philosophic tenor of most of the remarks. If a lone statistic got into the copy, it looked like a futile bumblebee whizzing about in a great drawing-room. "The American people have frequently made it unmistakably plain that they are either averse to thinking or that they are unable to think," said President Butler to the graduates of Columbia; and the sentence, restated in a variety of forms more or less effective, came from lips both humble and illustrious on a great number of rostra. All this is interesting. Commencement speeches never mean much to graduates, but they are often of tremendous import to the generation which makes them—the generation, therefore, of older and rather baffled men, worried more about the moral and psychological structure of the nation than about its business establishments. A decade ago, we were a people of facts and figures. We attached extraordinary significance to reports. All these things played us false. The most eminent calculators stand revealed as dubs who added up the wrong columns of figures. Today there is no choice save retreat to the line of general principles, almost of axioms, upon which some sort of intellectual building can be attempted. This line the commencement speakers of 1934 have by no means clearly unearthed, but the evidence proves that they have valiantly attempted reconnaissance.

To the Noes

AN AMUSING and instructive legal controversy has just ended, with the dismissal by the United States District Court of the suit brought by the poet Alfred Kreymborg against the comedian Jimmy Durante. The poet was attempting to recover, for the comedian's unauthorized use of certain of his *opera*, what might be called, without putting too fine a point on it, very substantial damages. He was asking for $100,000—a sum which must have constituted an all-time classic high among prices paid for poetry, if the courts had sustained the complaint. So far as we have gathered (from a perhaps not meticulously exhaustive conning of the printed evidence), Mr. Kreymborg based his charge solely upon what he termed Mr. Durante's infringement of copyright; it was this fact which we had in mind above, in using the word instructive. We find it far more instructive, indeed, than the highly technical legal opinion on the intent and extent of the copyright law, on which dismissal of the case was founded. Can the nature of poets actually be changing? Or have we been mistaken about them all along? If we, for example, were a poet, and had written something with a *bona fide* poetic purport, which had then been seized upon as appropriate material by a little goblin of a public entertainer whose genius for insane comedy caused every syllable he uttered to be hailed by his numberless public with a sort of intoxicated delight—it would not in those circumstances, we think, be our copyright that would chiefly bother us. If we could gather our shattered ego together to sue at all, we should not base our suit on anything so paltry as infringement. Mayhem, with touches of mental cruelty and heavy overtones of murder, would be more nearly the ticket.

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THE PRESIDENT AND WAR DEBTS

By HENRY CARTER

WAR DEBTS are once more to the fore, and this time it is a serious business. The recent passage of the so-called Johnson Act, with its subsequent interpretation by the Attorney General barring token payments, puts a definite end to the period initiated by the Hoover moratorium of 1931, and thereby confronts President Roosevelt with the most searching test of his diplomacy and statesmanship which he has yet encountered. The debt payments fall due June 15, and any failure on the part of the debtor nations to make their payments under the existing debt agreements in full and to date will expose them to the disabilities provided in the Johnson Act, which will exclude their future securities from the American investment market and will cause them to be unequivocally rated as defaulters. The utter unlikelihood that any of them (barring one or two minor exceptions such as Finland) will be able or willing to make the enormous payments accrued and accruing is patent beyond need of emphasis. All the bitterness attached to the war debt question is being forced once more into the open. To impugn the national honor and good faith of a sovereign nation by terming it a defaulter is diplomatically a very serious thing, and yet under the Johnson Act the President will have no choice in the matter. The debtor nations cannot or will not pay; we will accept nothing less than the letter of our bond; the impasse is complete and seemingly insoluble.

On the surface the Johnson Act would appear to represent congressional diplomacy at its worst, through its deliberate attempt to force the debtor nations into moral as well as financial default as a horrible warning to the American people against financing another European war. Its purpose in this sense is entirely laudable but it is doubtful if the warning is needed. Besides, if ever we should find it expedient as a matter of policy (which God forbid) to finance another European war, we will do it regardless of the present war debt embroglio or the warnings of the Johnson Act. Moreover, considering the present and prospective market for foreign bonds in the United States, it would not appear that the exclusion from it provided by the act for defaulting nations is likely to constitute a very severe penalty. Further, it may be observed, the act would seem to run directly counter to President Roosevelt's characteristic policy of seeking permissive rather than mandatory powers. Yet he not only signed the act but prior to its passage gave it the support of his high office. The most adroit diplomat of his day, he has apparently forced the crisis which the Johnson Act entails, and has tied his own hands into the bargain. So out of character does his policy in this instance appear that it becomes necessary to probe beneath the surface and inquire what end he is seeking to pursue.

The obvious answer is that he is trying to collect the debts, and it is the correct one. Throughout his campaign and throughout his term of office he has reiterated his conviction that the debts can be paid and his determination that they shall be paid. The brusque diplomatic notes of June of last year to the nations then failing to pay are clear evidence of that determination and belief, and his private conversation on the subject is reported to be as emphatic as his public statements. Now the President is neither blind nor stupid nor addicted to parrot phrases: yet how to explain this attitude in the face of the manifest impossibility of any hope of its fulfilment under existing political and economic conditions? If the President's known political character and his policy in this matter are to be reconciled, the further question must be asked, What are these war debts he believes he can collect? Perhaps in the answer to that inquiry we may find a clue to his diplomacy.

The war debts are quite simply the credits we advanced to our associates in the war against Germany, to enable them to carry on their efforts in the common military cause. When we entered the war in 1917, the Allies were on the verge of a complete economic and financial prostration which would have paved the way to a quick and easy German victory. To prevent this and so to make possible the final defeat of Germany whom we had, for reasons of our own, declared to be our enemy, the United States supplied the Allies with the financial support which averted the threatened collapse. In short, the loans were made for a political purpose advantageous to the United States as well as to the Allies. The loans were political, not economic or commercial: no questions as to ability to pay or security, the criteria of commercial banking, were asked or were in order. The extension of these loans was determined by purely military and political considerations. We wanted to win the war, and this was the way we could best keep from losing it. This original political character of the loans must be kept in mind if there is to be any basis for an ultimate amicable settlement capable of being fulfilled.

It was after the war that the difficulties over the debts began to arise. There was at first a disposition in many quarters abroad and here to treat them as outright subsidies to our associates. However we were not sharing in the spoils of the war, and President Wilson stood firmly on the

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proposition that the debts were to be repaid, to which the Allies assented. Indeed the revulsion of popular feeling in the United States after the war against things European would have made any other position impossible. Substantially we felt that the debts must be paid, and that for the rest Europe might go to hell in her own particular fashion. This sentiment played its part in the defeat of Wilson's League of Nations and in the return of the Republican party to power, and shortly forced a consideration as to how and on what terms payment might be made. The technical situation was this: each credit or advance as it was made had been covered by the nation concerned with a note of hand bearing interest at 5 percent. It was clear that in view of the colossai sums involved, nearly $12,000,000,000 in all, none of the debtor nations in their impoverished post-war condition could pay the principal except over a very long period of years; in fact, that they could not even pay the 5 percent interest regardless of principal. A composition of debts was obviously essential, and after extended and somewhat acrid exchanges, accompanied in some instances by barring of certain nations from the American bond market (just as the Johnson Act now seeks to do), a formula was adopted of "capacity to pay" which formed the basis of the various Mellon debt funding agreements concluded between 1922 and 1926. Under this formula, England, which was relatively prosperous, was to pay an average of 3.3 percent; whereas France and Italy, which were less so, paid 1.6 percent and 0.4 percent respectively. Schedules of semi-annual payments of interest combined with payments against principal were drawn up to run over a period of sixty-two years, and these payments were duly made over the first years. From the American point of view the question was settled and closed, in spite of increasing indications of restiveness on the part of the debtor nations at the prospect of continuing payments on this scale over two generations.

With depression the whole structure collapsed, and in 1931 in the most statesmanlike stroke of his career President Hoover called for a year's moratorium on all intergovernmental debts, including German reparations. At the Lausanne Conference of that year the Allies went further and after virtually abolishing reparations looked hopefully to the United States for a similar concession in respect of war debts. However, by that time President Hoover was in the midst of a bitter political campaign and for obvious political reasons could make no move toward a reconsideration of the question. With his defeat, however, the Allies at once entered urgent representations for reconsideration, as the moratorium had expired and debt payments were due on December 15, 1932. Regarding these pleas President Hoover sought counsel with President-elect Roosevelt in the hope of securing the latter's support for a program to meet the emergency, but the latter, determined to keep a free hand in the matter, declined to accept any political resonsibility until he should be in full exercise of his office. The outcome was that the British paid in full, as did Italy, but with the proviso that this would be the last time on the original scale and that they would look for a drastic modification of the Mellon agreements; France and her eastern European Allies acknowledged the obligation but paid nothing and once more requested reconsideration. On March 4, 1933, the war debts finally became President Roosevelt's baby.

For a time it was rumored that President Roosevelt would ask of Congress plenary powers to deal with the debt question, but in spite of the subserviency of Congress on nearly every other subject in the then existing domestic crisis, it soon became evident that this was one thing it would not grant. Consequently nothing was done, and when the June 15 payments fell due France and her eastern European Allies once more paid nothing, while England and Italy presented payments of about 10 percent of the amount due "in token" of their acknowledgment of the debt. These were accepted, but it was made clear that they would not be regarded as constituting precedents; at the same time the right of any debtor to aproach us with a view to securing reconsideration of his debt was freely conceded. A determined attempt was then made by the Allies to lay the question before the London Economic Conference. However, President Roosevelt was not yet ready to act, nor did he consider the time or place appropriate, and the effort was rebuffed with some heat. In December England and Italy again made token payments, France and others paying nothing. Rumors persisted that the President would ask the 1934 session of Congress for discretionary powers to deal with the debts. However, as it was plain that congressional sentiment on the subject continued vehement and rampant as ever, he apparently decided that a new approach to the question was necessary. At any rate, Congress, with his known approval, passed the Johnson Act, the bill which has produced the present diplomatic impasse.

What is the answer? Again we go back to the question, What are the war debts the President has in mind? Are they the Mellon debt agreements which the Allies are neither able nor willing to pay, or are they the original political loans made during the war? If it is the latter he is thinking about, a gleam of light appears in the east.

We have seen that the loans were political in character, not economic. The suspicion arises that in attempting to deal with them as commercial debts, which they were not, instead of as political and military loans, which they were, we departed from the realities of the case and so laid the

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ground for their inevitable breakdown with its concomitant straining of relations. Politically contracted debts are susceptible of repayment only in accordance with political principles and realities: they are not to be judged by the commercial standards of the market-place nor the rules of a civil bankruptcy court. To profess otherwise is to ignore the realities which govern the intercourse of nations and the political factors which bind the hands of statesmen. On the basis of the present debt agreements it is as impossible politically for any foreign government to make payment in full as it would be for an American President to effect total cancellation. We cannot but know that this is so, for the present agreements have certain grave political faults which have contributed to their collapse even more powerfully than did the economic effects of the depression. For one thing, their term of sixty-two years, two generations, is altogether too long for the sense of political obligation to have any effect. Again, some of the nations, notably England, have paid us very large sums and still find themselves owing as much or more than they did at the conclusion of the war. No government can politically tolerate being subjected to such a situation. If default is the alternative, they will accept default with all it implies.

However, more important than either of these considerations, and perhaps the fundamental one in our debtors' reaction toward the debts, is the instinctive resentment of Europe against the thought of being asked to pay interest on political loans made for the prosecution of a war in which we were a participant. For an analogy, we may recall the anger and sense of outrage aroused by the tales current in 1919 that the French were attempting to charge rent for the trenches occupied by American troops: emotionally and politically the present case of the debts is in no wise different. There are political limits to "capacity to pay" as well as economic ones, and in the case of a political loan they are the controlling ones. If this fact be recognized, the light in the east becomes stronger.

These considerations may or may not be in the President's mind: yet to assume that they are would afford for his debt policy a coherency otherwise lacking. It is not insignificant that in the recent refunding of the Finnish debt the United States substantially cancelled all interest. Presumably similar treatment is to be extended to our other and more important debtors: diplomatically and morally it would be difficult to deny their claim to it.

Once it is granted that interest has no place in the repayment of political loans of this sort, and once we are prepared to credit to principal interest payments already made, we have at a stroke moved forward to a footing where it becomes possible to proceed in a friendly atmosphere to the negotiation of debt agreements which shall be politically capable of ratification and fulfilment by the governments concerned, where "capacity to pay" can be measured in political as well as economic terms. It may be that not all the debtor nations will be able or willing to pay off the full principal of their loans; it may be that Congress will see cheap votes in an intransigence which demands interest as well as principal to the last red cent. These are matters for the future to determine after the question has been restored to the political plane where it belongs. But beyond question it is certain that, Johnson Act or no, we are not going to get paid until we have divested ourselves of the rôle of Uncle Shylock. The way to do this is to recognize the war debts for the political debts which they are and accordingly to forego all thought of interest. The late President Coolidge once remarked, "They hired the money, didn't they?" The answer to this would be emphatically "No, they borrowed it." Morally and psychologically there is a world of difference. If this be the thought which is shaping the President's policy there is yet a chance that he may be able to make good on his undertaking to collect the debts; at the least he would succeed in salvaging what remains of them that is politically collectible, and would at the same time draw from them the virus which has poisoned their consideration for the past fifteen years.

It is true that Mr. Roosevelt's recent war debts message to Congress seems to have been conceived in the spirit of the Johnson Act, and is hence in itself unlikely to afford a way out of the present impasse. It is also true that the British refusal to continue debt payments which followed it, and which cited the Johnson Act as one of the reasons for its decision, has made the deadlock complete. Nevertheless if in providing the political setting and pressure necessary for a *de novo* approach to the debt problem and for the creation of an atmosphere in which it can be treated with political realism, even though it be through the medium of technical default, the Johnson Act may yet serve a purpose. This may not have been the original intention, but it is the President's opportunity.

Questions

Can the heart live
  Upon the wilted withered crust
Which the proud fling, the pious give
Kneeling in tears, having no more to give?
  For lack of better fare it must.

But will God take—
  Glad that I yield so much to Him—
My pinchbeck thanks? For His Son's sake
He will be grateful; and, for my poor sake,
  To hear will hush the seraphim.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

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THE END OF A HERESY[1]

By KARL THIEME

Last week Professor Thieme discussed the problems which underlie the present conflict inside the Lutheran church organization of Germany. The present paper discusses the fight now in progress and outlines conclusions which he and his friends have drawn. He finds in the circumstance that the "individualism" of Protestant theology led directly to an "impressive demonstration of the credibility of Catholicism," and holds that many Germans will find the road—or a road—to Rome.—The Editors.

THEREWITH the liquidation of Protestantism inside the new German social order was completed. The Church is no longer to be found where the individual, bound only by the free decision of his conscience, believes he hears the Word of God correctly preached, as Luther taught. "Church" is rather a name given once more to a corporate body, visible here on earth, which is nevertheless not the all-encompassing *corpus Christi mysticum* but only the Nordic-German folk-personality, "German Christianity."

This fact has been by no means clearly realized, particularly because from the theoretical point of view the habits of eternal protestation, of freedom of conscience and of uncompromising struggle are dubbed German. But practically the only kind of protestation which is now permissible is that which suits the leaders, all other varieties being repudiated as "non-German." If the new movement could triumph completely inside German Protestantism, the most rigidly centralized national church would result that has ever been known in history. It would establish the dual papacy of Bishop Mueller, protector of the "German Christians," and of his viceroy, Bishop Hossenfelder, both of whom have been appointed leaders for life.

But of course the trend has not gone that far, will not go that far. The reason is not only that, after all, a third of all Germans who are citizens of the Reich and a half of all Germans resident in Europe are Catholics, but also that the conflict between the principles which the new movement has sought to unify is of such destructive force that it has shaken the new German Evangelical Church to its foundations within a brief time.

The external developments are well known. The group which, founded in 1932, had sponsored the introduction of National-Socialism into the churches—i. e., the "German Christian" group—laid claim to ecclesiastical leadership immediately after Hitler's rise to power, demanded the organizatorial union of the existing 28 Landeskirchen and insisted upon the elimination of all Jewish influence. The really extraordinary event was the radical change of personnel in the administration of the Church within little more than three months, although both law and precedent shielded the individual from dismissal, granting integrity far more than did any state legislation. This extraordinary occurrence becomes more intelligible as soon as one sees how it parallels developments in the universities. In the light of the new "conformity," which has become an article of faith, the legitimacy of the old ecclesiastical leaders, who did not join the new trend without reservations, is open to attack. They are accused of failing to understand the people and the changed times. "The hour of destiny" therewith becomes the phrase serving as a second standard of measurement for the orthodoxy of German Protestants. Of course not all of this occurred without regard to preceding events. It would take too long to outline here the causal relations between the weakening of traditional dogmatic under the knife of a destructive criticism and the appearance, in the place of the Church, of a "people" defined in naturalistic-racial terms and a "time" which is nothing else than the momentary spiritual condition of that "people."

After the change in personnel referred to above had been effected with help of the state and under cover of elections characterized by purely political feeling, the work of altering the ecclesiastical constitution was undertaken with the assistance of older leaders remaining in office and now completely submerged. Soon there appeared the opposition of groups, at first small, which had taken offense at the "Aryan paragraph" as applied to the Church.

Of course this was, as a matter of fact, a crucial point. All other changes had naturally been opposed, but the antagonists had no way of deducing their arguments from clear-cut articles of faith which still bound every Lutheran. Here was avenged again the fact that Luther had considered all questions of outer ecclesiastical organization the concern of the temporal power only, and so had, for all practical purposes, delivered the Church into the hands of every power that did not violate the letter of the Confessions. But the "German Christians" were immediately compelled by the demand of their activist supporters for proofs of advancement to go ahead and apply the "Aryan paragraph" to ecclesiastical office, thus giving scandal to all those whose conviction it is that the third article of the Apostolic creed absolutely prohibits differentiations between baptized persons on the basis of race. Indeed, the exclu-

[1] This is the second instalment of this article, begun in last week's issue.

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sion of Jews is especially prohibited since these, descended from the chosen and later rejected people, lose their nationality as soon as they become Christians.

It was now evident that in Germany large groups of Protestants were still deeply attached to the Church of Christ. Noticeably enough, many of the strictly orthodox (fundamentalists) tried to account for the "German Christian" stand with all sorts of flimsy excuses, while the only theological faculty which repudiated the "Aryan paragraph" and all that went with it was that of Marburg—fortress of theological liberalism. Generally it was proved that the better Lutherans were those who clung to the Reformer's principle of a free conscience, while the poorer Lutherans were those who clung to his doctrinal teaching. Therefore they were better Christians, yes even better Catholics, in that they followed the commandment of the Church which ordains that the voice of conscience is to be set above all other voices. For the Church knows that the well-informed conscience will obey her in all things, having realized that the individual, however intelligent, must necessarily err, while the Church as such cannot be misled since she is the body of Christ and has the truth.

This last conclusion is that to which the development inside German Lutheranism has led a number of Protestants, including the writer of these pages. We have been compelled to witness how the Church in which we were baptized and confirmed unmistakably abandoned the creed which she herself had taught us. We were forced to see that the brave resistance offered by individuals to this corporate apostasy led only to further decline of the Church, owing to the lack of a rightfully established instance which could have been their authoritative spokesman—an *ecclesiola* in *ecclesia*. Of course we welcomed that resistance. The work done by the *Notbund der deutschen Pfarrer* was heroic and magnificent. But the "German Christian" movement nevertheless proceeded, arriving at length at a position where repudiation of the Old Testament, Pauline theology and even the crucifix foreshadowed an emerging heathenism.

Whatever may or may not happen, the venerable Lutheran Church of Germany, now four hundred years old, is irretrievably a thing of the past. While the old confessions remained in force in the established *Landeskirchen,* one could somehow overlook the fact that there was scarcely anyone who could find in their formulae the expression of his own faith. Today the Church governed by Reichsbischof Mueller still regards the old confessions as nominally in force; but all honest men demand a "new confession" while each one of them—in truly Protestant fashion—conceives of it as that which conforms with his views or those of his "school." As soon as the outward compulsion (i. e., the central administration of church finances) is removed, the Lutheran Church will of necessity fall apart into a multitude of sects.

Such a collapse would, however, be more important in Germany than in America. Here Luther's churches existed during four centuries in the closest association with the princes . . . and then, during fifteen more years, in desire for them. They lived by reason of the authority of the professorate, which authority was exercised not merely in Germany but throughout the world. Adolf von Harnack once said, cynically enough, that Germany had two articles of export—chemical products and theology. But the days of the theology are no doubt over. For the kind of academic freedom to which our theology owed its world-wide fame and the kind of Church which could provide such a freedom under the protection of the State will never return again. A spiritual phenomenon of the first order has disappeared from the earth forever.

While we realize these things, we cannot refrain from expressing the thanks which we, German Lutherans impelled by their consciences to go from the study of Protestant theology home to the Catholic faith, owe to this Lutheran Church, this theology and this government. It seems to us that there could be no more impressive demonstration of the credibility of Catholicism than that the most carefully devised organization for the creation of individualism should have served to bring us—and those who will follow us—to acknowledge freely and without constraint (yes, even against the grain of prejudices absorbed in early years) the truth of Catholic teaching. And do we need to turn from Luther today in any spirit save that of grateful petition, now that we realize the moving depth of his experience of the utterly undeserved nature of Divine grace—grace not a jot or tittle of which can be earned by any human effort—and now that we may lawfully hope to preserve the Faith in our hearts always without sundering ourselves from our dear mother, the Church?

What distinguishes us from earlier German converts in a corporate way is the conviction that as genuine inheritors of the Christianity of the Reformation, we have a task to perform for the benefit of those who were hitherto our associates in the Evangelical churches—the task of helping them, in consequence of the suicide of the ecclesiastical structure erected by the Reformation, to draw the conclusion that return to the Catholic Church is inevitable since she alone has kept the Faith intact. On the other hand we also believe we can serve our newly won Catholic brethren in a quite specific fashion, after the manner of the prodigal son who returned, hungry and exhausted but also hardened and experienced, to the house where he could render some aid to his older brother.

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OBSERVATION OR THEORY

By WILLIAM EVERETT CRAM

THERE are two quite distinct methods of arriving at a conclusion on any problem which may turn up. Some of us follow one of these methods, and some the other; few, if any, make use of both, even to the most limited extent.

The first and most ancient method is that of depending on our eyesight: believing what we see, whether it seems possible to our limited powers of comprehension or not. The Red Queen, you know, learned as a little princess to believe three impossible things every morning before breakfast, and anyone depending upon observation must do at least that.

The other and more up-to-date system is that of arriving at an explanation by means of scientific theory, and whatever appears contrary to that theory must be discarded as impossible and out of the question. Those who follow this latter rule—including, it seems safe to say, the great majority of us at the present time—usually take the ground that hallucination, crossed nerves, defective retina, or one thing or another make us think we see something which really does not exist, like the old farmer who said, "There ain't no sich animal," when for the first time in his life he saw a giraffe in the menagerie. If they should chance to see a ghost, a fairy, a mermaid or a sea serpent, this is the stand they would take, simply ignoring the fact that countless clear-minded observers in the past had reported exactly the same thing.

I must include myself in the former rather than the latter class. For whereas I have never seen either a ghost or a sea serpent, yet if I do run across one of them I shall accept its actual existence as the simplest explanation.

In my boyhood, when Uncle Oscar Leighton was visiting at our house, I listened with the keenest interest to his narrative of an experience which he had as a lighthouse-keeper off the Maine coast.

He said to my father: "William, I am going to tell you something which I would not dare to tell anyone else for fear they would make fun of it, but I know that you are broad-minded enough to look at a thing fairly. One morning just at sunrise I was turning off the light, when this thing came swimming by. The sea was flat with only little whitecaps and the thing, whatever it was, showed up clear not half a gunshot off the ledge. It was fifty or sixty feet long with fins along its back and a long thin neck and a head like a horse sticking five feet up out of the water."

From that time down to the present I have fully believed in the existence of sea serpents as a very rare and almost extinct species of primeval marine life. Indeed, my outdoor study of natural history from the very first brought before my eyes things far more difficult to believe in than sea serpents.

Though I had taken for granted that active life among the insects ceased with the coming of winter yet, when on cold midwinter days I noticed tiny black spiders traveling here and there over the icy crust of frozen snow drifts, I never hesitated in believing what I saw. Nor did I charge to defective vision the sight of baby eels, two or three inches long, apparently without effort ascending the perpendicular face of the mill dam down which the water foamed and roared with all the tremendous velocity of the springtime freshet.

But if my father, as a student of ancient history, had told Uncle Oscar that in days long past there had been a period of oversupply of all the luxuries and necessities of life and yet no one could find a remedy for poverty and hunger, he would from the rational point of view have had good excuse for doubting the statement. It would seem that anyone with practical intelligence could quite easily think out an answer to the problem. Yet here are a few of the solutions offered for just such a situation, existing today:

(1) Rewards given by the government to those who will lessen their production of crops of one sort or another, either by diminished acreage planted or by plowing under before harvest time. If this scheme is found practicable along the line of crops, it must work equally well with all the other necessities of life, whether produced on the farm, in the factory, at the mines or on the high seas, the obvious result being increased cost of living for all, higher taxes and less spending money.

(2) Freer spending of their cash or credit by everyone in order to bring back the good old days of extravagance, days when business was booming and there was work with high wages and salaries for everyone who desired it, and opportunities open to all for investing whatever money they were unable to spend in stocks and bonds and unquestionable securities bearing high interest and dividends and forever rising in market value. Of course, times like these invariably have been followed by times of depression in almost exact ratio to former extravagance.

(3) Thrift and economy practised by all classes until such time as we have finally succeeded in cancelling our debts and mortgages and have laid up enough to warrant a freer scale of living all around, thus bringing back prosperous times such as have always followed close on the heels of long, dull periods of thrifty living. Just that type of thrift only a few years ago caused the failure of banks and business concerns everywhere,

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threw people out of employment, and sent stocks and securities tumbling down to their true value.

(4) The discovery of some new type of industry in the way of construction of something which everybody will want, like the automobile, for instance. I do not recall ever having seen an exact estimate of the number who earned good livelihoods in the construction of automobiles and by investment in stocks and bonds concerned in this industry—constantly rising in value. Of course every last cent of the money so earned had to come out of the pockets of those who bought and maintained the cars: money which might otherwise have been lavished on food, clothing and rent, or invested at low interest in some safe banking company.

(5) War on land and sea bringing unlimited employment with high wages, taxes and cost of living higher still and endless toil, the seven-day week and the twelve-hour day with forced economy and thrift. We have only to recall to mind the sight of the well-to-do sifting their coal ashes and sorting out the clinkers to be reburned again, dispensing with sugar for their coffee and butter for their potato-flour bread, to bring back memories of those good old days of the last war; and all wars have been alike in this way.

(6) Prohibition, to enable the workingman to spend for the comfort of his family the wages that in other days went for the purchase of wine and beer, and at the same time to give employment to thousands of agents appointed for the enforcement of the law and paid high salaries. These salaries were taken out of the tax money collected from the rest of us; also work was provided at high profit to countless bootleggers and rum runners and speakeasy proprietors.

(7) Repeal of prohibition, bringing the return of the brewery and distillery where those now unemployed may have once more within their reach a chance to earn a good living, and also providing an immense revenue to the government, which will be spent for public works and lower taxes all around. This revenue to the government, coming from money spent by all classes for wine and beer and liquor, will make the lowering of taxes just so much more desirable, for we will have just so much less to pay our taxes with.

(8) Holding firmly to the gold standard, thereby keeping whatever cash we may happen to have at its full buying power, so that laborers' wages and government salaries alike can be counted on to buy a good living—and thus help the wealthy class (if it still continues to exist) more than all the rest.

(9) Going off the gold standard, in order to give plenty of money to all, which will—at least theoretically—help toward evening things up between the classes, the rich and the poor, even though a $10 bill will not buy quite so much as a $5 bill would under the gold standard.

(10) Socialism, with each one working blindly for the welfare of all the rest of the world, and without any incentive for planning or individual foresight, when once he has fallen into the routine of doing his own little part according to rule of thumb. The stubborn opposition of the farmer and peasant class to this sort of thing appears to be now the one obstacle that is holding development toward Socialism in check, but once this opposition has been overcome we may safely count on the fading away of their simple-minded common sense, and with it goes the last trace of human sanity of our erea.

And now comes up the question: Shall we strive to save and gradually build up again what little intelligence our civilization still possesses, or will it be better to give it up as a lost cause and accept Socialism as the one practical solution of the problems that lie before us?

As we look back along the historical trail of the past, all the periods of want seem to have been due to drought and flood combined with lack of communication between countries and lack of adequate means of transportation, and now that we have succeeded in overcoming these difficulties the problem before us must be very simple. But just how did we lose the intelligence necessary for its solution? Was it not through the severe strain forced upon the human mind capable of dealing only with simple every-day matters, by universal education, the attempt to solve social problems and those which science, sociology, philosophy, etc., have held up before us in our so-called intellectual classes, just as specialized work and the routine of machinery have offered problems to the laboring classes? Speculation and big business may also be charged with having a share in this degeneration of the human mind.

The mind like the body needs reasonable exercise to keep it in repair and to encourage upward development during the period of growth, but whenever this matter of exercise is carried too far, development is checked by overexertion. The hunter and the peasant, day by day and season after season, stake their prowess and their labor on luck and weather changes; they use their simple powers of observation, and endeavor to profit thereby for the future. They believe what they see, whether they can perceive a reason for it or not. The scientist, the philosopher and the sociologist on the other hand are rather inclined to doubt the veracity of their own observation when unable to figure out any satisfactory explanation, and taking this stand are on the direct road to insanity due to the overstraining of a human brain naturally incapable of anything so difficult.

Being a farmer myself, I have a natural and instinctive opposition to every form of Socialism,

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but the little common sense of which I firmly believe I am still possessed tells me that it may be the practicable solution.

As an illustration of how Socialism works under conditions similar to those of our present state, we may well study the history of the honey bee. I have cared for and studied a few colonies season after season for the last half century, and have learned to admire the wonderful efficiency of their selfless cooperation, though at the same time constantly irritated and provoked by their utter imbecility as individuals.

Each member of a colony of thousands has its own specialized schedule of work which it does day after day for the benefit of the colony as a whole, and for just so long as the regular routine and specialized work goes on without change, all is well with them. Each summer morning the honey gatherers start off from the hive in all directions; the nurses stay at home to feed the young, giving a special diet to those that are to be raised as queens. The wax gatherers cling in bunches overhead in the hive, where they are fed by those especially appointed to the task, while others gather the wax from beneath their wings and build honey and brood cells with it. From the front door of the hive and extending back into the interior are long lines of winnowers with their wings fanning the outdoor air, to dry the new honey before it is capped in the cells.

Whenever one of the honey gatherers discovers a new field of honey-yielding flowers, it stops before the entrance on its return and by signs and signals informs the others just where this field is located. Then it disappears inside the hive to deposit in the comb the honey it has gathered, while the others, without waiting for it to show them the way, start off in the exact direction it has indicated, often going a mile or more from home, and yet, though the wind may shift and the clouds gather while they are gone, return straight as a rifle shot when they have gathered their load. If, however, during their absence the hive should be moved a few rods to one side or the other, they just cluster by the hundred on the spot where it stood and die there, though the hive is still in sight only a little distance away. A honey bee that enters a house will buzz back and forth across the upper panes of the window and starve to death, with the lower half of the window open.

Almost anything out of the ordinary in their lives means death to them, and the same is true of ants with their socialistically ordered lives.

Compare this with the aptitude of a spider, a dragon-fly or any other form of insect life in which the individual depends on itself for overcoming difficulties when cast adrift.

A spider when washed downstream by the freshet, swims to the nearest floating object in sight, climbs aboard and when it comes within reach of a reed stem or cluster of bullrushes throws out a line to leeward, and when this makes fast, pulls its raft shoreward and lands and then starts off looking for a location for its new home. In case some narrow trickle of water bars its way and the wind is right, it just spins out a line of web and builds a bridge from one grass stem to another until it is across, then having chosen a location for its camp, spins the web for catching game.

Thus spiders of various species will overcome adverse and unexpected conditions. Last summer a male and female grey spider had their webs a few feet apart under the roof of my pump shed, both webs made fast at the bottom by a single strand four or five feet long extending down to the edge of the trough. These were brushed away the first time the cows came there to drink, and the webs left flapping loose in the wind. Then the male crawled down and hitched a silk strand to a piece of dry dung as big as himself, climbed up over the trough and the support of the roof, pulled his single line taut and hoisted the weight attached to it up to within a few inches of the bottom of his web disk where it hung, holding his trap firm in air and out of reach of the cows' horns. The next day I noticed that the female had fixed her web in the same way and a week later saw another web trap with a similar weight hanging beneath the roof of the cow shed.

All members of the anti-Socialistic spider family seem well supplied with individual intelligence and instinct, while the honey bee is lacking in both. In the early summer it is a common occurrence for swarms of honey bees that have been under domestication for generations to wander away to the woods accompanied and led by their queen and scouts to some hollow tree where they enjoy their life of Socialism for years, but always under the same routine as in the hive, and just as hopelessly doomed to extinction whenever untoward circumstances call for individual resourcefulness.

Toward which of these two entirely opposite social conditions are we now heading?

I Enter Oxford

It was a bird first spoke to me at Oxford
Through the white fog a single, tentative word.
There were, that daybreak, in my new world, only
I and a bird.

I had no grateful syllable to answer,
No littlest sign to say I understood
That lyric word to me, more brave than sunlight,
More kind than food.

Oh! there are bells and there are spires at Oxford,
Ancient, heartbreaking, wordless, splendorous things;
Only to me belongs this simple, silver
Welcome on wings.

SISTER M. MADELEVA.

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IN THE CHURCH

By AGNES ROTHERY

FOR FOUR centuries the Church of Santo Tomás, with its three belfry towers, with its finely severe yet charming façade, has stood opposite the Chapel of El Calvario. Both church and chapel are raised twenty or thirty feet by flights of stone steps, so that they seem to hold the plaza between them, as two white hands might extend themselves protectingly on either side of a precious object.

The stairway before Santo Tomás is so wide that the sweep of the lowest steps curve out beyond the walls of the church. As they mount they narrow in diminishing semicircles until the top one is the width of the open door. High above these graceful steps the clouds of Guatemala hurry by, and along the rises billow other little puffs not of cloud but of smoke. The smoke uncurls from earthen censors swung by brightly clad Indians who are kneeling in scattered groups before the door of Santo Tomás.

On Sunday morning the plaza, which the night before was empty, is a whirlpool stirred and fed by an increasing trickle of tributaries. From over half a thousand square miles they come trotting: two thousand gaudily robed Indians, each woman with a bundle or a baby upon her back, each man with a burden on his shoulders or his head. By daybreak they are moving to and from tables set up alongside the street, under and out of booths which have sprung up like toadstools not only in the open plaza but insouciantly in the middle of the road. Crowded as are these booths and tables, most of the goods for sale—and most of the people who want to sell them—are on straw mats on the ground. Bags of raw cotton, measures of corn, chickens, pottery, blankets, candles, pigs, melons—among this miscellany the crowd eddies unceasingly. Sometimes a child whimpers or a pig squeals; somewhere a fife plays over and over again a monotonous series of notes. But except for these occasional noises it is very quiet. Bare feet fall noiselessly on bare earth and Indian voices are low. The plaza is like a medieval fair reflectd in its motion and color, but with no echo, in a vast mirror. Protecting it on either side, like two white hands, extend the Chapel of El Calvario and the Church of Santo Tomás.

On the platform before the chapel a few Indians kneel before a smoking pile of incense. Across the plaza on the lowest step of the stairway to the church there rises, from a crude stone altar, more clouds of aromatic smoke. Several Indian men stand tending this fire, their women squatting beside them until they shall be finished, while further up before the open door—a dark arch in the white façade—kneel others swinging censors, their backs to the panorama of the plaza.

The church is long and lofty, its whitewashed walls of stucco, its whitewashed raftered ceiling of wood. But passing the screen which half shields the door, one is not conscious of ceiling or walls, of unglazed windows or far-away high altar. This is not because these features are partly obscured by the haze of incense drifting in from outside. It is because all the depth, all the glow, all the profound movement of the place is lower: is on the dark stone floor.

Upon this floor, from door to sanctuary—upon the sanctuary steps themselves—there flicker, there burn, there shine like lowly stars, hundreds of lighted candles. Standing upon the ancient stones without the intermediation of any holders, these tapers are arranged in parallel lines and in symmetrical groups forming a constellation that extends the length of the nave. The incense rises toward the ceiling: the candles burn upon the floor, so that all the interest of the extraordinary scene is below at one's feet.

At first, on stepping in we see only the points of fire and the dark stones. But as our eyes grow accustomed to the dusk they see that between the rows of tapers are placed offerings: leaves arranged in neat order; a row of pine-needle clusters; four ears of corn; a piece of money; bunches of herbs meticulously spaced; petals of flowers scattered according to some understood plan. The flames burn on either side these votives, and behind the flames, with heads bowed or with hands upraised, kneel the donors of these primitive sacrifices, the worshipers at these humble altars. A hundred—two hundred—Indians are kneeling thus in adoration, in supplication, in ecstasy. Their bare legs and feet upon the stark stones, the brilliancy of their costumes subdued by smoke, they kneel, they burn their candles, they place their offerings.

From their moving lips issues a mighty murmur of which each individual note is soft, but whose composite volume swells like the ocean. With complete unself-consciousness they are praying out loud, in limpid Spanish, in whispering Quiché. They pray to God to bless their crops and they place corn between the candles to make their meaning clear. They pray to their dead—for their repose and for their aid—and for each departed spirit they place and light a candle. They pray to be healed of their infirmities, to receive justice from the alcalde, for peace within their families. They give thanks for the birth of children, and of all these various concerns they speak

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simply and directly and at length to God, to the Blessed Virgin and to Jesus Christ, her Son.

The long rows of absorbedly kneeling figures are not the only ones in the church. There is constant quiet shifting before the side altars. Women with babies on their backs stand before the statue of Saint Sebastian and cross themselves. Men, bent under huge burdens, kiss a candle and hold it up with both hands toward a blackened painting of the Nativity. Before the Communion rail kneels a youth in a new suit embroidered with flowers and birds, beside him a girl, her black hair braided and twenty silver chains around her neck. They remain unmoving—oblivious to everything, to everyone, around them—before good Saint Peter with his keys and good Saint Paul with his sword, before the *Eterno Padre* Who looks down upon them, with His beard, His cross and His dove. An older man with a serious face is standing before this couple. He gestures with a tall lighted candle, he blesses them, he makes the sign of the cross, he prays in Quiché monosyllables, thus performing a sort of marriage ceremony which is a custom of the country and not expressly forbidden by the Church.

And now a black-cassocked priest accompanied by two barefooted, brown-skinned little sacristans is proceeding with many pauses up the nave. Over each humble constellation he stops, and in sonorous Latin offers the prayer for the dead. He dips the silver sprinkler into the silver basin and scatters holy water upon those earth-borne points of flame.

The supplicants bow their heads, but as the black-frocked figure, having completed his priestly function from door to sanctuary steps, turns to leave, many dark eyes are raised to follow with love the form of their Padre, who can so miraculously intervene for the souls of the departed, who can baptize the joyfully welcomed new-born son or the less joyfully welcomed daughter, who will give ear to their sorrows and their sins and who, although he is no longer so young as when he had first come to them, will rise in the cold of darkest night and travel on foot if need be over mountains and through streams, bearing to some dying Indian the holy oils of Extreme Unction.

The Padre, noticing visitors, comes up to welcome us and invite us to his house directly adjoining.

We pass through a side door of the church and find ourselves in a patio with a garden in the center and *corredors* enclosing the four sides. The *corredors* are old: their tiled roofs sag with the weight of centuries; their balustrades and the benches placed against them are weather warped by four hundred years. But the roses are new-born, the lilies unsullied by the fading of a day, the marguerites might have been embroidered that morning upon an angel's robe. Against the whitewashed walls sparkle oranges and pomegranates—so gay, so young, the fruit and flowers in the cloister which is crumbling, decaying, dreaming of Spain.

The Padre courteously invites us into his study. In answer to our questions he tells us about the Indians with whom he has lived so long, so intimately and with increasing affection. Thirty-three thousand are in the sixty-four cantons of his parish—he is, he explains, merely a parish priest. Thirty-three thousand Indians scattered over five hundred miles, and a handful of *Ladinos* congregated chiefly in the town. The Indians are very poor, yet they manage to maintain the church.

As in the days when the whole populace, high and low, about Rheims or Chartres or Pisa lived only for the joy of worship and rejoiced only in the glory of the cathedral which their ancestors had, through many generations, erected and which they, each individual to the extent of his power, supported, so it is still in the town of Santo Tomás.

Although he is busy every moment, the Padre never has to urge them to keep the feasts of the Church or such observations as they understand. An Indian mother will walk thirty—forty—miles from a place where there is no resident priest bringing her baby to be baptized. Indians from cantons where there is no cemetery will carry their dead over the mountains to Chichicastenango so that they may be buried to the accompaniment of bells and bombs and drums and skyrockets.

As for the meaning of certain ceremonies which we have noticed, well, the Padre must admit—he smiles a little deprecatingly—that they are not all in strict accordance with the usual ritual of the Catholic Church. The Indian mind, he explains painstakingly, is not constituted to comprehend certain abstract doctrines of Catholic theology, such as the mystery of transubstantiation. Therefore he, as a conscientious priest, may not give them Holy Communion. Only the *Ladinos,* who are better educated, may receive all the sacraments. Since the government insists upon a civil marriage at the alcalde's before permitting a religious ceremony, and since the charges for the former are excessive, the Indians have fallen into the way of dispensing with both civil and ecclesiastical formalities. But they live together as man and wife more faithfully than the *Ladinos,* who can afford the fee for the civil ceremony and may, therefore, enjoy the religious one afterward.

The Padre leans forward. Religion is the most important, the most joyful, part of their lives. It is integral in every deed and thought. They would die—they frequently suffer—for the right to worship according to their beliefs and the customs of their race. The longer he lives among them the more he knows that here, in his parish of Santo Tomás Chichicastenango, here in the Church of Santo Tomás, God is close to His children.

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A MODERN "MEDEA"

By CORNELIUS J. CLIFFORD

"MY DEAR Father, Greek is gone and Latin is going." It was the distinguished head of a great American university who uttered those words to the present writer, scarcely two years ago, when, in pleading for a young man's appointment to the university itself, it was urged that the applicant was, at least, "a good classic"; that is, a man with some genuine education in him. The words came back to me with renewed and ironic meaning only recently when I went over to see the students of St. Elizabeth's College of Convent, New Jersey, present the "Medea" of Euripides in the beautiful setting of their own Greek theatre, built into a hillside overlooking the vast stretch of valley that sweeps northward and east to the Orange Mountains. I had seen the theatre many a time before and been touched by the enthusiasm and resourcefulness of the brains that planned it and carried it out with such regard for scholarship and the needs of the jaded modern eye, grown half-blind and otherwise atrophied by modern industrialism.

The play was not given in the original Greek, but in Gilbert Murray's noble and almost too brilliant English version. *Traduttore traditore,* runs the well-known Italian tag, warning us beforehand against the loss which must inevitably attend the effort to render the idiom of one humanized speech in terms of another; and the warning gives further point to the significance of Moritz Haupt's saying, "Never translate; translation is the death of understanding." That the young women who ventured the difficult and almost impossible task of giving a modern audience, all but guiltless of classical Greek, a true dramatic sense of the "Medea" were capable of interpreting it just as effectively in the original, was evident to any intelligent spectator before the performance was half over.

The esthetic details of costume and gesture and the problems of stage-grouping and choric movement had evidently been studied and drilled into them by one who knew. The rich, early spring green of the close-cut turf in the centre of which stood the altar round which "fifteen Corinthian women" deployed as they sang, or carried on the dialogue, with Medea herself; the almost perfect character of the afternoon's sun, whose rays were filtered into running gold, it seemed, as it shone through the great trees of the park above them to the south and west; the fitful, half wanton, behavior of a breeze that tempered the heat of the afternoon—all these things contributed, each in its own degree, to create that incalcuable element of naturalness which is beyond art, even while it serves to interpret it.

And yet it was the acting that proved to the intelligent spectator that the players, assisted, as they were, here and there, by a small group of classical students from Seton Hall, as also by two children from the Bayley School in Morristown, really understood both the great tragic motive of the play itself as well as their several individual parts.

That was why we could not help feeling that the characters were capable of presenting the noble lines of Euripides in that simple, direct and unstilted Hellenic speech which made him the most human and actual of those great competitors, during the penultimate years of the fifth century before Christ, who were shaping, all unknown to themselves, the canons of great dramatic art for all time.

The part of Medea was taken by Isabelle McCarthy of the class of 1937; and it is the highest praise to say that she not merely acted her part, but looked it, down to her finger-tips; tall, dark, tragic-looking, with superb carriage and dignity of gesture, she carried the play through from its sad beginnings where she emerges from the palace doors down to the poignant scene where she lets Jason know that all his schemes and plans had been overborne by the barbarian wife "turned tigress" in her revenge.

Of the musical treatment of the Chorus of the play it would be difficult to write understandingly, even if one had the technical knowledge needed for so recondite a theme. Mr. Horace Middleton's interpretation was dignified and threnodic; rich in flute tones and minors and "dying falls."

The audience was as unlike the average as an audience could well be in these days; it had seriousness and taste; and its measure of absorption both in the poetry and in the music gave it a distinction that one might seek for in vain among more discreetly advertised schools in the United States. The upper tiers of seats were filled by a large company of teaching Sisters, many of them from various academies and schools of the Newark diocese.

I could not help asking myself how many of the handful of Jesuit Fathers present knew that the nun who has directed the higher classical studies of St. Elizabeth's during the past score of years, was a lady who had won with distinction the degree of Ph.D. in Columbia during the Great War and whose name is cited in honorable juxtaposition with Dill and Glover and Sandys, by the latest Oxford editor of "Ausonius" in the Loeb Classics.

No; *pace tanti viri,* Greek is not yet wholly gone; and Latin is not likely to go while Europe renews itself in those higher schools of America which have both a tradition and an ideal that "take no taint from time."

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SEVEN DAYS' SURVEY

The Church.—In commemoration of the three-hundredth anniversary of the founding of Maryland, Archbishop Curley of Baltimore celebrated a solemn pontifical military field Mass, attended by 75,000 people, in the Baltimore Stadium May 30. Reverend Peter Guilday's sermon outlined the part Catholics have played in the history of the United States. (An article in the June 22 issue will describe the occasion in greater detail.) * * * The Paris Foreign Mission Society, founded 275 years ago and at present responsible for territories occupied by one-fifth of the non-Christian world, now ranks first among the institutes of the Church dedicated exclusively to foreign missions. Its foreign missionaries, numbering over 1,000, are assisted by the 1,435 native priests they have trained; complete care of five territories has already been turned over to native ordinaries. * * * His Eminence, William, Cardinal O'Connell, of Boston celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood June 8. * * * Right Reverend Monsignor H. P. McPherson, president of St. Francis Xavier University of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, announced at the annual commencement that "a practical cooperative economic movement inaugurated three years ago in an attempt to revitalize the economic and social life of eastern Nova Scotia has succeeded beyond expectations." He commended the substantial savings to farmers in their purchases due to group action instituted by the Extension Department of the university and the accomplishments of study clubs organized in the various centers. * * * St. Michael's Church of Union City, N. J., noted for its perpetual novena to St. Gabriel conducted by the Passionist Fathers, was destroyed by fire May 31. The Blessed Sacrament and several precious relics were saved by the monks; the loss was estimated at $1,000,000. The six Masses held June 3 in a huge tent erected on the monastery grounds were attended by more than 10,000 persons. * * * Conversions to the Catholic Church in the United States during the Holy Year of 1933, numbered 60,322, or an increase of 13,881 over the calender year 1932.

The Nation.—President Roosevelt and administration leaders in Congress speeded a $525,000,000 appropriation to aid drought-stricken areas, while news of scattered rainfalls held out some hopes of nature's ameliorating the rigors of the disaster. * * * Carl Dickey, former editor of *World's Work* and of the *Outlook,* now a publicity man, testified before the House investigating committee that German officials sponsored German propaganda. Mr. Dickey denied that his firm was subsidized to conduct anti-Semitic propaganda. * * * The Fletcher-Rayburn bill for the regulation of stock exchanges was finally enacted by Congress and will take effect October 1. A measure for the similar control of commodity exchanges was being rushed through the legislature. * * * The violent Toledo strike was finally settled by the federal mediator who secured concessions from both sides, the employees accepting a 5 percent increase in salary and the company officials agreeing to recognize a union committee. Other strikes in Toledo were apparently settled at the same time and a threatened textile strike was averted by the intervention of General Johnson. * * * The Republican National Committee meeting in Chicago wiped out the party deficit of $206,000 and was struggling at the time this was being written to find a chairman and platform issues which would reconcile the differences of the Old Guard conservatives and the progressives. * * * The tariff bill requested by the President giving him wide powers for the negotiation of reciprocal tariff concessions, was passed in the Senate by a vote of 57 to 33. The House which had passed the original bill, was expected to approve without delay administration amendments added in the Senate. * * * Treasury offerings of $800,000,000 of bonds and notes were oversubscribed seven times.

The Wide World.—M. Barthou went to Geneva as spokesman for the Doumergue Cabinet and made a disarmament speech which greatly reduced the hope for peace in Europe. Averring that security could not be had only behind stronger armies, because of Germany's war spirit and rearmament, the French diplomat upbraided England for refusing to sign a pledge to oppose Germany on the Continent. Liberal British newspapers were deeply shocked, not a few of them remarking that while the present status of the Reich was greatly to the advantage of France, a day might come when this would no longer be the case. * * * Texts of the Concordat between the Holy See and Austria are now available in an English translation. Among the interesting details are these: detailed legislation concerning the independent authority of the Church in the appointment of theological faculties (a sore point in the Austria of old); recognition of "the civil effects of matrimony contracted in conformity with canon law; proclamation by the state of official ecclesiastical holidays, including Corpus Christi and the feast of Saints Peter and Paul; and the placing of clerical titles and dress on the same rank with those of the military. * * * The Paris *L'Intransigeant* declared that President Roosevelt's memorandum on the war debts was "purely platonic, without any bearing on the existing international situation." *L'Action Française,* however, surmised that "American money" was behind recent Leftist maneuvers, Washington hoping in this way to secure a government willing to pay the debts (!). * * * In Breslau, Germany, the world's greatest treason trial opened on May 31, when 104 young Communists were hauled out of jail to face charges of having plotted a move against the Hitler government. The state alleges that the accused met to study Bott's Manual under cover of a zealous interest in Esperanto. * * * A sharp note to Japan said that the

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Soviet government regretted that Manchurian steamships, chugging along in Russian waters on the Amur River, had disregarded the challenges of guards and had gone ahead photographing.

* * * *

Rejoicing in Cuba.—Two months after granting independence to the Philippines the United States renounced her contractual rights of intervention and financial supervision in Cuba. The signing of the new treaty (which was ratified by the Senate in Washington without a dissenting vote) was greeted in Havana by a salute of twenty-one guns; church bells pealed and sirens and whistles blew. Crowds in the Cuban capital gave Ambassador Caffrey an ovation. In a radio speech hailing the new understanding President Mendieta declared, "Today Cuba, with her sovereignty unimpaired, salutes all other nations." The United States by abrogating the Platt Amendment of 1903, also relinquishes her supervision of Cuba's foreign affairs, her right to establish further naval bases and the continuance of certain sanitary measures which she instituted. She retains the naval base of Guantanamo. Article IV of the new treaty provides for the outbreak of a contagious disease, in which case either government may suspend communications with the other "without its act being considered unfriendly." At the same time the Foreign Policy Association announced that on the invitation of the Cuban authorities it would inaugurate on June 15 an impartial survey of the economic and social conditions of the island. Under its auspices an American commission of distinguished professors and other authorities will be sent to prepare a report for the people of Cuba and of the United States, recommending a relationship of mutual advantage to the two nations. The Rockefeller Foundation is to finance the work.

An Enormous Bill.—Forty-three Republicans combining with 263 Democrats and three Farmer-Labor members of the House against forty-four Republicans and two Democrats, passed a huge relief and deficiency bill which gives President Roosevelt a potential $6,000,000,000 for relief and recovery expenditures. The majority of these are to be at his own discretion. The measure is described as being the largest peace-time appropriation in American legislative history. It makes a direct cash appropriation of $1,178,000,000 for relief and public works. In addition the President is authorized to employ all available Reconstruction Finance Corporation cash and credit and to use all unexpended Public Works Administration funds, which is a grant of power not requested by the administration. The bill in another important section would permit the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to purchase the bonds and other obligations of beneficiaries of Public Works Administration advances. This, according to the appropriations committee of the House, will open the way for large federal government acquisitions of state and municipal bonds, and in fact would result in the federal government holding the bag for the entire financial outlay on works in which the original intention had been for the federal government only to share expenses with the state and municipal governments. Opposition to the measure deplored use of Reconstruction Finance Corporation funds for relief purposes and urged the House to face the issue squarely and appropriate funds for relief work without subterfuge. "There is no chance," said Representative R. L. Bacon of New York, "of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation funds expended for relief coming back."

Leftward.—The national convention of the Socialist party, held last week in Detroit, produced a violent three-way division which is to be settled by an immediate referendum of party members throughout the country. Planks covering democracy and pacifism voted into the platform by a majority of 10,822 to 6,512, caused the split. It was resolved to denounce "the bogus democracy of capitalist parliamentarianism," and, "if the capitalist system should collapse in a general chaos and confusion, which cannot permit of orderly procedure, the Socialist party, whether or not in such a case it is a majority, will not shrink from the responsibility of organizing a government under the workers' rule." In case of war the party will call for "a united effort to make the waging of war a practical impossibility and to convert the capitalist war crisis into a victory for Socialism." Norman Thomas, chief sponsor of this "radical" course, reinforced his leading position in the party. His ally, Leo Kryzcki of Milwaukee, was elected chairman of the national committee and his sympathizers gained a majority of the places on the Socialists' executive board. The right wing, led by the New York delegation, and especially Louis Waldman and John L. Coldwell of Rhode Island, called the program suicidal, illegal, communistic and anti-democratic, but their strength, since the death of Morris Hillquit is much reduced. Ben Gitlow, Trotzky opposition Communist, and Jay Lovestone, head of a Communist opposition group, also addressed the convention. It is considered possible that these Communist dissident factions may unite with the dissatisfied extreme Left wing of the Socialist party and form a new revolutionary alignment.

Obituary.—On June 4, the Reverend Charles Leo O'Donnell, president of Notre Dame University since 1928, died after a long struggle to regain his shattered health. Previously he had served six years as American Provincial of the Congregation of the Holy Cross. His terms in office coincided with the era of Notre Dame expansion. Millions of dollars were invested in new buildings; under the late Knute Rockne, the university became the mecca of the football world; and despite the vast housing plan, rooms for all students who sought admittance could not be found. Father O'Donnell served to especial advantage during recent lean years which followed the academic boom, his eminence as a poet ("The Dead Musician and Other Poems," 1916; "Cloister and Other Poems," 1922; "A Rime of the Rood and Other Poems," 1928) serving, with Father Julius Nieuwland's chemistry, to advertise Notre Dame as a home of arts and sciences. Father O'Donnell was born on November 15,

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1884, at Greenfield, Indiana, and was ordained in 1910. His career as a teacher emphasized artistry rather than scholarship, and he played genial host to literary men, notably poets, who sojourned in Indiana. A spirited wit was associated in his person with an intense concern for mystical theology. Once a bald-headed man, noting Father O'Donnell's greyish locks, said: "Father, you're turning grizzly." The answer was: "I'd rather be grizzly than bare." Boys at Notre Dame mourned the passing of another figure of a great, chaotic age.

Stalwart Brothers-in-Arms.—The Holy Father has recently bestowed the Knight Commandership with star in the Order of St. Gregory the Great on Hilaire Belloc and Gilbert K. Chesterton in recognition of the services they have rendered the Church by their writings. Belloc is the son of a French father and an English mother and a direct descendant of Joseph Priestley, "the father of modern science." He is best known as a historian, and is also a noted economist, biographer, poet and essayist. Much of his best work is found in magazine articles. "Europe and the Faith," "The Path to Rome" and "The Servile State" are among his most compelling and best known books; "Towns of Destiny" and "Miniatures of French History" are among his most appealing. Hilaire Belloc is a Catholic by birth. Although he is an Oxford man, he did not become a British citizen until 1902 when he was thirty-two years of age. Gilbert K. Chesterton, who was born in England in 1874, is widely known for his poetry, essays, literary criticism, economic theories and novels and detective tales, as well as his vigorous, good-humored defense of the Church. "Orthodoxy," written while he was still outside the Church, is considered his finest study of the ground for Christian belief. A later work, "The Everlasting Man," though somewhat heavier in tone, is also highly regarded. Chesterton is an ardent distributist. He edits *GK's Weekly,* to which Belloc contributes many articles, a periodical which seeks to further the distributist movement in the British Isles. His most recent book, "St. Thomas Aquinas," is a biographical sketch intended to lead people to read about the Angelic Doctor "in better books."

History in Transjordan.—An expedition into Southern Transjordan made by the American School of Oriental Research under Professor Nelson Glueck of Cincinnati, has brought additional historical light to the journey of Moses and the wealth of Solomon. The Exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt, past Edom and Moab and into the Promised Land, has been placed almost conclusively in the thirteenth century B. C. Pottery finds made by the expedition indicate that in this century the Moabites and Edomites, through whose territories the Jews wished to pass, first settled in their lands. The date is supported by Father Vincent of the Dominican Biblical School in Jerusalem, considered the greatest authority in the world on biblical archeology. The American scientists explored in detail the territory of ancient Edom and established its east, south and west boundaries, and also the position of its capital, the biblical Bozrah. Part of the land surveyed was tributary to King Solomon, and within it were found great copper mines and deposits of iron ore, important sources of Solomon's riches. One copper mine Professor Glueck found penetrated 165 feet into a vertical cliff, was sixty-five feet wide, and had pillars of the rich stone hewn around and left standing to support the mine roof. It was worked at the time of Solomon and its metal was evidently used in the construction and decoration of the Temple in Jerusalem.

Intelligent Censorship.—According to the June 9 issue of *America,* French Catholics, too, are taking a determined stand against the immoral motion picture. A Catholic radio and cinema weekly, *Choisir,* published at 65-bis, rue du Rocher, Paris, VIII^{e}, passes judgment each week on current films. The magazine, which fittingly enough has for its motto, "Vivre c'est choisir" ("Life consists in choosing"), evaluates each film from three distinct and separate angles: plot, esthetic quality and moral aspect. Initials are used to define the position of each production on the moral scale: P, for school children; S, for family entertainment; T, not suitable for all family entertainments though possible for some family groups; R, "reserved" for those whose characters are formed and more mature; I (*inquiétant*), doubtful; M, flatly condemned. Among others "Serenade à Trois" ("Design for Living") received this latter designation. Attacking the problem from the positive standpoint, *Choisir* makes a practise of giving clean films the benefit of every possible commendation; thus producers have a definite inducement to give the public films that measure up to Catholic standards of decency. *America* declares that, in the training of Catholic youth, the faculty of choice is a privilege rather than a burden or a handicap.

The Monks Go West.—Since well before 1920, the monasteries of Beuron and Maria Laach have been centers of liturgical study and worship. The theory of God and man upon which the liturgy is founded—essentially as old as the Church, but restated very ably by Cardinal Berulle—has been a central part of the teaching of Maria Laach, so ably headed by Abbot Herwegen. News has just come that the prior of the monastery, Dom Albert Hammenstede, will leave with a companion for the United States some time toward the close of June. It is hoped that conferences can be arranged, for groups as well as individuals, and that exhibits of the liturgical art work done at the abbey will find a responsive public in many cities. The objectives sought are not commercial. American Benedictines, convinced that the monastic school at Maria Laach should attract American priests eager to prepare themselves to the fullest extent possible for the sacred ministry, have promoted the venture. If this and similar visits can aid the spread of devotion amongst us surely no one will refrain from extending a cordial welcome. The liturgical movement (N. B.) is not a matter of tassels and stained glass. Inquiries concerning the itinerary of Dom Hammenstede should be addressed to Dom W. Michael Ducey, St. Anselm's Priory, Brookland, D. C., U. S. A.

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Dancing in the Park.—"He's a Colonel from Kentucky," played spiritedly by a fifteen-piece band of otherwise unemployed musicians, opened the first free, al fresco dancing party in the Mall of Central Park, New York, and as 500 well-behaved couples circled around to the music under the stars and the dark outlines of the elm trees, "A Thousand Goodnights" brought the dance to an end at 10:30. Comments by officials who had been sceptical about the project were altogether favorable. About 8,000 persons were spectators or listeners, besides 1,000 who danced, yet in spite of the large numbers, there was no disorder and no rowdyism to mar the civilized civic merrymaking. At a little distance boys and girls too young to join in the dancing roller-skated on the broad walk. A police captain with twenty men, and fifteen playground directors in the new greenish uniforms of the Park Department, and four women attendants, were on hand, but only as pleased, beaming spectators. Girls were not allowed to dance together, as this encouraged cutting in by strangers and, in order "not to lower the general tone" of the occasion, men are not allowed to wear their hats and must have their coats on and are not allowed to wear sweaters. A regular schedule of similar dances will be held throughout the summer.

* * * *

The Heat Wave.—Shaped very like a fan but suggesting other things entirely, the drought-stricken area which extends from the tip of Idaho east to Michigan and then southwest to New Mexico was promised a certain amount of relief by the weather man as this was being written. Temperatures had traveled up to heights unparalleled for late May, the sun forcing Iowa thermometers to 111 degrees. Harry L. Hopkins, Federal Emergency Relief Work Administrator, had developed a $200,000,000 program, calling for the rerouting of water supplies, the canning of foodstuffs and the inauguration of emergency work calculated to supply a stricken farm population with some ready cash. Virtually all state and municipal governments in the stricken region were trying to cope with extraordinary problems, such as the threat of summer forest fires and thirsting livestock. It was pointed out that, granted a speedy cessation of drought conditions, the situation is not necessarily hopeless. Some planting can be done in June, with reasonable prospects of a fair crop. But unfortunately no one knows what the future will bring. No "national disaster" is foreseen, the Department of Agriculture opining that surplus grain stocks will fill the nation's demands for the year.

Borrow or Tax?—On Monday, June 4, Mayor La Guardia invited ninety of New York's famous private citizens to confer with the Board of Estimate, which apportions municipal funds, on the problem of unemployment relief. The Mayor presented the problem of regular care for the unemployed, and of raising between $4,500,000 and $5,000,000 a month for that purpose. He requested written proposals from his guests to be studied and then debated upon in public hearings. Mayor La Guardia stated: "No matter what happens, neither the federal nor the state nor the municipal government can continue under the present relief system." No national action can be expected during this session of Congress, although one can anticipate for the future, he said, "some nation-wide system of unemployment insurance, of old-age security, of a uniform child labor law and perhaps sick insurance." The city has already borrowed $70,000,000 to make up its quota of funds spent running the present chaotic system. The city furnishes one-quarter of the total, the state another quarter, and the federal government one-half. During May new applications for relief were coming in at the rate of 1,500 to 1,750 a day, wiping out gains made in April and showing the urgency of the situation. The sentiment of the meeting seemed to be that new taxes rather than new loans must be found to meet current outlays. A "thanksgiving tax" on the wages of employed persons, and a subway tax of $.05 to be collected except when working people and school children are traveling, were proposed by James J. Lyons, the ingenious President of the Bronx. These plans evidently supersede his suggestion of a disguised public lottery.

What Is a "Dead Cat"?—The steel industry has 430,000 wage-earning employees. On June 11 the revised steel code, which alters price-fixing rules but does not affect labor conditions, becomes operative. The Amalgamated Association of Steel, Tin and Wire Workers has called a strike for June 16 involving 100,000 men, if its demands for collective bargaining are not met before then. The effect of such a strike on the other 330,000 steel workers has not been confidently forecasted. General Johnson tried to avert the crisis by offering to create a steel board similar to the National Automobile Labor Board. On June 5, his chief labor assistant, Dr. Leo Wolman, claimed that "everything is going along beautifully." The union leaders, however, said: "We object to General Johnson hanging more 'dead cats' on the President." As earlier examples of these "cats" they cited the automobile settlement, and "code election provisos, which name no date nor place nor supervisor," nor state what is to be on the ballot. The union will have nothing to do with a steel labor board and demands a conference for collective bargaining in which its chiefs may meet the employers face to face. A booklet published by the American Iron and Steel Institute says: "The industry stands squarely in favor of the right and the practise of collective bargaining with its employees. The only issue at stake involves the form of such bargaining." The employers stand for the form of employee representation or company union which, they claim, the majority of their workers desire. Steel production has been increasing in the face of falling immediate demand to counteract a possible shortage after June 16. Pittsburgh union workers are planning a march on Washington similar to the bonus march. The presidents of the Carnegie and the United States Steel Corporations issued a statement claiming the union agitation is under communistic influence. Governor Pinchot, after turing western Pennsylvania, reported to Washington that "the steel companies are arming with machine guns, barbed wire, etc."

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THE SCREEN

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Little Man, What Now?

I HAVE a deeply rooted suspicion that Hollywood may be surprised at the public reception given to the screen version of Hans Fallada's famous novel, "Little Man, What Now?" Heretofore, Hollywood has left it quite severely to the stage to depict the misfortunes and struggles of the poor and humble. The present production is therefore something of an experiment in testing the mood of a public which has felt so much distress on its own account during the last few years that it might easily be pardoned for declining to see further misfortune on the screen.

Hollywood's surprise is apt to come in the discovery that human beings are a good deal more generous in their emotions than they are supposed to be. So far as I can tell, the audiences at "Little Man, What Now?" are inclined to respond with eager interest to the sincere and affecting parts of the screen story. The real trouble with the Hollywood version is that it destroys, to an extent, its own test value by concocting a happy ending to what was intended to be quite a grim tale. As the story is now presented on the screen, it merits all of the old platitudes concerning the darkness before dawn, etc. Most of the people who see the film will not know that any change has been made. It would have been a vastly more interesting test of the capacity of human beings to share the sufferings of others if this fairy-godmother ending had been left out. We would have had a chance to see just how deep are the wells of compassion.

The story deals with a young clerk in Germany and the girl he loves unwisely. When she finds that she is to have a child they get married, in spite of the fact that the boy's employer will have only bachelors among his clerks in the hope that he can marry off his daughter to one of them. The discovery of the boy's marriage brings the loss of his job. The young couple then go to live with the boy's stepmother who proves to be a woman of decidedly cloudy reputation, who is being financed by a man who has run afoul of the authorities. The boy gets a job as salesman in a large department store, partly through the influence of his stepmother's "protector." It is not long however before the boy and girl find the situation so impossible that they have to seek small quarters of their own over a little furniture store in the slums of Berlin.

They find room for happiness even in these circumstances but the happiness is short-lived. The boy loses the job in the department store, partly through his own fault, just before the baby is to be born. A few crowning strokes of irony are administered while the boy is searching desperately for money to take his wife to the hospital. He gets caught up in a mob demonstration and is thrown into the gutter by the police. He finally returns to his home utterly broken only to find that his son has been born during his absence. His courage returns with the sight of the child and one feels that he is going to catch up some of the bravery which has hereto been lacking in his make-up. The story might very well have ended at this point, but it is here that Hollywood chooses to have a former friend in the department store, who is now in business for himself, turn up with the pleasant news of a new job which will solve the family's difficulties.

Up to this last scene there is a wealth of interesting character development—far more than usual in motion-picture stories. We see the gradual breaking down of the boy's false pride, which is always his worst enemy, and the substitution for it of an inner patience and courage. The last scene of course changes all this by making the solution of his difficulties an objective incident, something happening outside of himself rather than springing from within. Another thing that is never quite clear is why the young couple did not get married in the first instance. In a sense, the story has the same defect found in so much of our present-day literature, namely, that it romanticizes and excuses and condones a wrong attitude toward life and love. As in the recent play, "The Wind and the Rain," the point at issue is not so much that a wrong is committed—wrongdoing being the essence of a great part of dramatic literature—but the fact that there is no indication of regret for what has been done. The old discussion of good and evil is part of the dramatist's or novelist's work. The great danger is when the difference between good and evil is ignored or denied.

When Sinners Meet

WITH its usual astounding lack of logic, Hollywood has taken A. A. Milne's famous play, "The Dover Road," and changed the title to "When Sinners Meet." The implications of the movie title are obvious and crude whereas the play, itself, is an exceedingly neat and witty plea for a greater respect for the marriage vows, and a larger measure of common sense in solving marriage difficulties.

As those who saw "The Dover Road" will recall, the story concerns the experiment of a very rich man in bringing forcibly to his country estate various runaway couples who are following the traditional method of escaping from London by means of the Dover Road and the channel steamer to France.

This somewhat mysterious and very likable man employs a rather large army of detectives and others whenever he has reason to believe that a prominent English household is about to break up through some emotional entanglement. He then arranges to have the escaping couple kidnaped and brought to his estate where they are held in confinement for at least one week. During this week the genial host makes it his practise to house the erring ones in separate parts of his great house but to throw them together as much as possible during the day, in the hope that they will rapidly tire of each other. He also loses no opportunity to point out the mistake they are about to make and to picture the probable years of disillusionment ahead of them.

Fortunately, this particular host, having a very keen sense of humor as well as a sane and measured outlook on the more serious problems of living, manages to achieve his purpose without causing undue irritation, and in a manner vastly amusing to an audience.

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COMMUNICATIONS

PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH

Westfield, N. J.

TO the Editor: The questions asked by your editorial, "Progress of the Church," in your issue of May 11, reach the roots of the canker that is slowly but surely sapping Catholicism in the United States.

Material success amongst Catholics of the present and prior generations and the great god, "keeping up with the Joneses," have made Catholicism a mere formality with many of those who profess the Faith. They go to the sacraments but it is mainly a matter of routine and quite perfunctory. They are good Catholics statistically, but poor Catholics in the deep spiritual meaning of the word. To answer your questions seriatim is the proof of these statements.

"Is some measure of asceticism becoming more habitual among the Catholics as individuals?" Among the great mass of Catholics, the answer is "No." Lenten fasting, for example, is old-fashioned and practically non-existent. The noon-day Masses are another evidence. Get up early enough to go to Mass before work on a holy day? Perish the thought! Lie in bed until late Sunday? Of course! We must have one day for a late sleep.

The Catholic who practises any kind of asceticism is indeed rare. Naturally asceticism is not an advertised habit, but it must necessarily be accompanied by piety. What is the evidence in this regard? Observe those who go to Communion. They crowd up to the rail like a mob getting on a subway train and they rush out of church as soon as the priest leaves the altar. Asceticism? The average Catholic does not even know what it means.

"Is the mystical element in religion appealing more, or less, to the American Catholics?" To the little coterie who make week-end retreats and are generally active in Catholic movements, "More." To the great mass of Catholics, mysticism is practically unknown—even repudiated. They consider mysticism all right for priests and religious, but "Let *us* be practical," is their attitude.

"Is the practise of prayer increasing?" Again the answer is "No." About the only time that really fervent prayer is resorted to by the great majority is when some material boon is sadly needed; it is usually for that reason that novenas are popular. Yet a true appreciation of life here and hereafter should elicit prayers for spiritual help and prayers of penance. But note the comparative few who attend Benediction and devotions even during the month of Our Lady.

"Are retreats becoming more general?" The number who attend retreats may be increasing each year, but the totals are so small that they are insignificant.

"Is the liturgical movement gaining ground?" Yes, among a very, very limited number. These are generally the same few who make retreats and are at every Catholic affair. The others could not even explain what "liturgical" means nor grasp any value from an exposition of its importance.

Another proof of these pessimistic statements is onanism, or birth control. The very figures you quote of the increase in the number of Catholics prove beyond doubt its prevalence among Catholics. Either nature, in its biological effects, has suddenly become very niggardly, or else many, many Catholics are making a mockery of matrimony. That they should follow the precepts of the Church in the matter of matrimony they consider impractical: they claim it is too expensive and too hard on the women. Yet they go to the sacraments—of course. They think they can "eat their cake and have it too," or attain heaven by doing as they please on earth. Right here is the greatest menace the Church faces.

Asceticism, mysticism, prayer and liturgy can only be appreciated by those who "know" God—through humility and simplicity of faith.

G. B. NEALE.

Houston, Tex.

TO the Editor: I was surprised, to say the least, at your editorial in the May 11 edition of your magazine which was based on the recent issue of the "Official Catholic Directory." You quote from the directory figures showing that the Catholic population in the United States increased last year by 54,191, of which 49,266 were converts. That would leave 4,925 as the natural increase of births over deaths and desertions.

Houston has a population of 300,000, or about one-sixty-seventh of the total Catholic population in the United States. Last year there were 5,209 births reported in Houston and 3,584 deaths. That made a natural increase of 1,525. And vital statistics are none too accurate here. Houston has approximately 50,000 Negroes and 20,000 Mexicans. Anyone familiar with these people knows how difficult it is to secure accurate reports on births from them.

Now if the Catholic population increased at the same rate as Houston, and I see no reason why it should not, there should have been an excess of births over deaths last year of 102,175. That is, 67 times as many as Houston had. But we seem to be short 97,250.

What is the answer? Is it that we have found more effective methods of birth control than the rest of the population? Or is the death rate among Catholics higher than in other groups? If the latter, it seems that the insurance companies would have discovered the fact and raised the premiums on Catholics on the grounds that being a Catholic is a hazardous occupation. I think neither explanation is tenable.

Another possible explanation is that the missing 97,000 are fallen-away Catholics. If this is true, we must admit that every time we succeed in converting one outsider two persons who are already members of the Church sever their membership. Such a condition should lead us to publish the figures with a black border of mourning. Instead of boasting over the great increase in converts we should be "viewing with alarm" the terrible drift away from the Church. Perhaps too much effort is being spent in gaining new members and not enough in trying to hold what we have. Personally I do not believe this explanation for our small natural increase either. It does not conform to observations.

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The answer to the whole thing seems to be that we simply do not have accurate figures. That seems so obvious that I repeat my opening remark that I was surprised at your editorial. Why bother to comment on figures that clearly are so incomplete and inaccurate as to be meaningless? What we seem to need is an "Official Catholic Directory."

M. E. WALTER.

Princeton, N. J.

TO the Editor: Your editorial, "Progress of the Church," in the issue of May 11, 1934, was read with great interest. I believe there is a decided progress of Catholicism in the United States.

The past depression has been a most important factor in bringing people, who had been up to that time indifferent to religion, into the fold of the Catholic Church. When such a calamity befalls a nation in time of peace, and when people see institutions, both social and economic, crash before their very eyes, they cannot fail to recognize in the Church an institution which has survived since the time of Christ, the only one which continues a prosperous existence when all others meet disaster, and, finally, one in the continued existence of which so many millions of God's creatures place implicit faith.

I believe that Catholic progress would continue at an even greater pace if Catholic students in this country had an opportunity to read the many books which have been written concerning the dogmas of the Church—what the Mass really signifies, and especially information with which to refute inane arguments of Protestants who know nothing definite about either Protestantism or Catholicism. Too few Catholics have done any reading whatsoever on this most interesting subject. Too many of all religions accept the little amount of teaching which they receive from their parents as absolutely sufficient for their needs. They do not seek truth, but take for granted the little that is taught them, and then apply it as befits their standard of living, or, rather, as is most convenient to them.

I am no great crusader or reformer, but I firmly believe that a little push on the part of earnest Catholics will be sufficient to start the ball rolling at an astonishing rate.

H. V. Q.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: The editorial, "Progress of the Church," which appeared in the May 11 issue of THE COMMONWEAL was very timely. It should produce thought and if there has never been an age so barren in a multiplicity of thinkers, it surely was "made desolate." The Catholic Church should be everything in this world, it is relatively nothing and all that Catholics want it to be is something.

Why this inferiority complex about the only real thing in life? Certainly if what we tell ourselves to be the most important thing in life is not what we tell our neighbors, then we are not convinced of our faith. It follows, that Catholics must first become acquainted with the letter of the Church and second with its spirit, which makes the knowing of the letter worth while. It must be brought home that "Catholic Action" to be Catholic must have each and every Catholic engaged in promoting the action. If the Church is to progress (not materially), every individual member must contribute to the progression.

This is not an idle suggestion and is not to be considered unattainable. Some may murmur *cui bono*. Well just this, Catholics will shape their conduct in conformity with their belief and in so doing will instil into all their actions the principles of Christianity, and everything they put their hands to will be marked by that spirit of Catholicity that has in times past conquered the enemies of Christ. The truth has to be expressed if non-Catholics are to experience it, and

"Truth has such a face and such a mien,
As to be loved needs only to be seen."

RAY BONNER.

PHILOSOPHY IN SURVEY

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Philosophers have far better things to do than to enter upon any personal quarrels, but my interest in philosophy forces from me a reply to Dr. McMahon's letter in the April 27 issue of THE COMMONWEAL. In this letter he implies that one should disregard or take *cum grano salis* the opinion of Dr. Gerald B. Phelan on philosophical works as expressed in his reviews.

In the beginning of his letter, Dr. McMahon acknowledges the learning and critical powers of Dr. Phelan but adds that *per accidens* they are the cause of his lack of appreciation of an author's point of view, or of an informal treatise as opposed to a learned monograph. How, I ask, can highly developed critical powers be the cause in any manner of what one must acknowledge is lack of critical insight? For a critic who cannot see an author's point of view, or who cannot distinguish between the character of different works is, to my mind, destitute of critical powers. Yet philosophers of high standing have recognized in Dr. Phelan these gifts. In the present instance, his review of "The Quest of Reality" clearly brings out the point that his criticism is of a book that poses as a learned work and is considered by others as such.

To plead for the toleration of informal treatises with slight inaccuracies is to ask a philosopher to deny his aim. Only truth can be tolerated. And American neo-scholasticism will prosper only when we become exigent in our demand; when we acknowledge that we have far too many superficial and "popular" expositions of philosophy unbacked by learned, thoughtful works; and when we overcome the habit of taking the former as authoritative works.

It is for the work of students of the first order that Dr. Phelan cries aloud. He is impatient with all else and above all with error. But one can admire such frank impatience. It has its rôle to play when our aim is knowledge which is synonymous with truth.

E. G. SALMON.

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BOOKS

Proselytizing

Protestant Home Missions to Catholic Immigrants, by Theodore Abel. New York: Institute of Social and Religious Research. $1.00.

THIS book is a very frank and, without any doubt, an authoritative, treatment of a subject about which not a few discussions have centered but upon which but few first-hand data have been available. It places before us the results of a study, under the auspices of a Protestant organization, of Protestant proselyting activities among Catholic immigrants in the United States. The field work back of the study involved an investigation of proselyting centers, where the activity was more intensive, particularly in the large cities where the foreign born are found in greater numbers, such as New York, Cleveland, Chicago and Los Angeles. The study also investigated a number of centers in Buffalo, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Denver and San Francisco, and in certain rural districts and small towns of Colorado, California and eastern New York and in mining regions such as the coal fields of Pennsylvania and the Iron Range of Michigan. This report is for the Protestant "home missions" in the United States a counterpart of that of the (Protestant) Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry.

The book under review is rightly called "frank" because it is an open admission of failure. Failure is reported first in the formal church work which predominated from 1880 to 1905. This formal church program operated first through "missions," usually located in rented rooms in the heart of a district inhabited by foreign born. We are told (page 20), that the "mission" type of enterprise is now rapidly disappearing and has never been successful except in cases where it has served as the starting-point for the organization of a church. The second type of enterprise is the foreign-language church. This study discloses that the attendance at those established ranges "from a handful to a little more than a hundred with an average of approximately fifty for each service." In addition we have the dispiriting (from the point of view of the proselyter) account of the foreign-language department of American churches.

Around 1905 a social program was adopted chiefly because of a growing recognition of the inadequacy of formal church work (page 58). Included in this program were such typical activities as group play, clubs, classes, nurseries and kindergartens, often supplemented by lectures, concerts, social gatherings, sports, moving pictures and other forms of entertainment. This program, too, so we are told, has failed of its purpose: "They come for entertainments and socials," said one minister, "but they neglect to come to church or religious meetings" (page 74), and on the following page we are informed that few second-generation immigrants are found in Protestant churches.

The net result of these proselyting activities among Catholic immigrants is summed up in the statement that in the course of more than fifty years between $50,000,000

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Next Week

THE COMING VERDICT, by Charles Willis Thompson, reviews the shadows of approaching political events and reveals that historically a President whose party goes down to defeat in the congressional elections falling mid-way in a presidential term, will himself be defeated two years later. As for local issues, Mr. Thompson, who is an experienced political reporter and student of American politics, does not think much of them. "Theoretically the mid-administration election is decided on local issues, but all history shows that the theory is moonshine . . . the people are dissatisfied or satisfied with what they have been getting since the President was inaugurated and the result shows what has happened and what is going to happen." There is much more pithy comment in this article. . . . AT BALTIMORE, by Michael Williams, describes vividly the scene and the significance of the tercentenary celebration of the founding of Maryland and the establishment of the practise of religious freedom in this country. . . . RICHARD STRAUSS, by Karl Schaezler, is an appreciation of the great living composer whose seventieth birthday was celebrated on June 11 of this year. "Very likely the works of no living composer are so frequently performed throughout the world as are Richard Strauss's 'Salome' and 'Rosenkavalier,'" write the author, adding, "Strauss is the master of genuinely bewitching harmony and of sharp dissonances which can really make audiences shudder and his mastery of characterization is in its own way supreme and his command of musical forms extraordinary." . . SUGAR: THE KEY TO CUBA, by Joseph F. Thorning, is a brilliant exposition of the economic dilemma of a near neighbor of ours whose country by every dispensation of nature should be a little paradise.

and $100,000,000 have been expended (page 104), and that the number of Catholic immigrants in the present membership of American Protestant mission churches amount to between 25,000 and 30,000. Incidentally most of the proselyting centers which the report is concerned with carry on their work among the Czechs, Hungarians, Italians, Poles and Mexicans, while some had their field of work among the Russians, Ukrainians and Croatians. Eighty percent of this proselyting is done by the Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists, while some centers are conducted by the Episcopalians, Congregationalists, and the Free Methodist, Evangelical Christian and Pentecostal churches.

In presenting its conclusions the report points to the failure of the movement described and advocates retrenchment in the amounts to be expended in the future. We read: "The possibility of an expansion of mission work in the future depends, therefore, upon the chance that a growing dissatisfaction with the Catholic Church will develop among immigrants and their descendants. There is no evidence in the present situation that would suggest the probability of such an occurrence on a large scale" (page 105).

Protestant Home Missions to Catholic Immigrants is an extremely interesting study and can be read with profit by everyone entrusted with the care of souls. To the priest it should vitally suggest that if the proselyting campaign has failed, an apostolic crusade, if persisted in, can but succeed.

GERALD SHAUGHNESSY.

Rather Depressing

Treatise on Right and Wrong, by H. L. Mencken. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $3.00.

MR. MENCKEN has written a very serious and rather depressing book which he himself calls "ribald," but which his kindlier readers would probably designate as discontented. It sounds ribald to say, "The eminent Saint Thomas Aquinas swallowed the Augustinian hodge-podge without gagging"; but the ribaldry lies, not in the statement, but in the strictly journalistic language in which it is couched, and which pervades the volume. Mr. Mencken's discontent goes beyond Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas, beyond "the pollution of ethics by theology." He is deeply dissatisfied with his Creator. The God of the Jews is "of generally bad character," the aider and abettor of evil things. The God of the Christians is an illusion, powerless to rectify the world.

There is nothing easier than to find illustrations for an argument. One has only to pick out the facts that fit, and reject those that do not. Mr. Mencken quotes liberally from Lecky to prove the general depravity of the sixth and seventh centuries which were eminently religious. He makes a strong showing for sin; but it would be quite possible for an enthusiast who loved and admired the seventh century, which produced saints, as Dr. Walsh loves and admires the thirteenth century, which produced scholars and cathedrals, to find good bishops to match

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Lecky's bad bishops, good abbots to match Lecky's bad abbots, good sovereigns and queens to match Lecky's bad sovereigns and queens. Think what reading the criminal records of the United States would make twelve hundred years from now if they were presented without any corresponding good deeds. Yet all our banks are not robbed, all decent citizens are not assaulted, all malefactors do not roam the streets, all errant schoolboys do not murder their grandmothers. Think of Chicago tried by the Leopold-Loeb test! What a thrill for readers of 3134, and what an argument against the travesty of law and justice!

It was only to be expected that Catholics would come in for a heavy share of Mr. Mencken's general dissatisfaction. He laments that "the Catholic system is in its very essense inimical to intelligence," while Protestantism escapes this charge only because "in America its moral mandates are no longer taken seriously by any intelligent person. Honors seem easy until it is pointed out that more Protestants are mentioned in the American "Who's Who," and this is a damning proof of Catholic inferiority. A recent critic has demonstrated the same melancholy truth by showing that Catholics write—or at least publish—fewer books *per capita* than do their Protestant or agnostic neighbors. To the enlightened mind this is an asset for Rome. Nobody in his senses can think that what this country needs at this time is more books. The sins of our ancestors have dipped us all in ink.

One item in Mr. Mencken's table of discontent stands out bleakly from its neighbors. We do not lose rest over the shortcomings of the seventh century; but when we read, "The great failure of civilized man is his failure to fashion a competent and tolerable form of government," the stricture strikes home. Why does not civilized man desire a competent and tolerable form of government? If he did, he would have it.

AGNES REPPLIER.

A Good Anthology

The English Galaxy of Shorter Poems; chosen and edited by Gerald Bullett. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.00.

AN ANTHOLOGIST is like an impresario. He "presents" poems. He presents poems that have been triple-starred in any number of previous productions, but he has changed the scene, the lighting, and the faces of the supernumeraries, so that if he is a good impresario, the total effect is something finer than the poets themselves had any right to expect.

Mr. Bullett's "Galaxy" contains "some three hundred poems not to be found in any other general anthology." It also omits at least that many from the customary titles. This is not to be construed as a complaint. Among the poets who have considerably fattened their all-time batting averages are: Thomas Campion with seventeen poems here to nine in the "Oxford Book"; Blake with fifteen to ten; Beddoes with eight to three; and then John Clare is represented with nine poems; Emily Dickinson with four; Gerard Hopkins with four; A. E. Housman with five.

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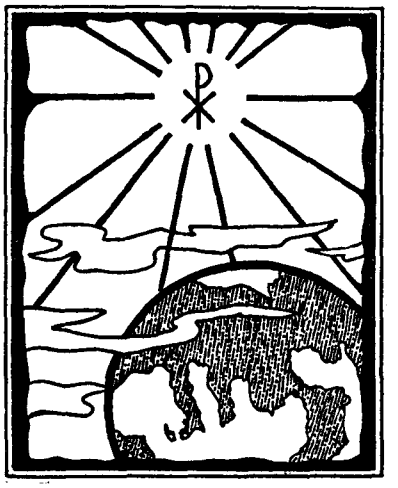

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THE LITURGICAL PRESS
St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn.

Some conspicuous absentees are Chatterton, Gray, George Russell, all the French-form poets of the last century (who would seem to have been born for such an anthology) and all Americans except Poe and Emily Dickinson. Poe has only one poem, but it is a great pleasure to see "Helen, thy Beauty is to me," standing for once all by its hyacinthine self.

Some of the omissions are explained by the title, but more are undoubtedly due to Mr. Bullett's avowed intention to "steer a discreet course between blind deference to traditional opinion, and an overweening confidence in my own personal taste." It is to be expected, of course, that in the heat of this effort, he should be more often confident than deferent. That is as it should be; nevertheless a certain few names are necessary to give any anthology its odor of sanctity, and some of these names are American names. A sonnet by Longfellow and an epigram by Emerson will work wonders toward conquering the hearts of the populace.

The "English Galaxy" deserves such a conquest, but won't get it. In the first place, as must already be obvious, it is not a "representative" collection, and its character is determined no more by the limits fixed to the chosen poems (none to be longer than "Kubla Khan") than by Mr. Bullett's "conviction concerning the nature of the poetic impulse." The book is perhaps a little too special to become a popular anthology. It has perhaps too much of the seventeenth century, and too little of the early and middle eighteenth. The great public, I imagine, will have nothing to do with seventeen short poems by Thomas Campion. The great public would prefer "I know a thing that's most uncommon," "When lovely woman stoops to Folly," "Condemn'd to Hope's delusive mine," and so on.

One thing more. It is curious to compare poems from the late eighteen-eighties and nineties in the "Galaxy" with those in the "Oxford Book." It is almost like reading two separate literatures. And yet the poets are very often the same. By pruning Kipling back to the roots, Mr. Bullett's book has space for a few additional poems by Bridges, Yeats and Gerard Hopkins, and what a whale of a difference those few poems make!

VINCENT ENGELS.

Cooper's Grandniece

Constance Fenimore Woolson, Literary Pioneer, by John Dwight Kern. Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press. $2.50.

THIS narrative of Constance Fenimore Woolson's life, with an account of her literary achievement, is stimulating reading. Professor John D. Kern of Temple University gives a critical estimate of Miss Woolson's books which will prompt many readers to repent any personal neglect of this American writer whose novels and short stories were a force in the literary transition toward realism active during the 1870's.

The sixth daughter of Charles Jarvis Woolson and Hannah Cooper Pomeroy, a niece of James Fenimore Cooper, she was educated in the genteel traditions of

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private schools in Cleveland and New York. She took frequent long journeys with her father through Ohio, Indiana and Wisconsin, and after his death in 1870 accompanied her mother on annual tours through the Carolinas, Tennessee and Florida. In 1870 her mother died, and Miss Woolson went to Europe, never to return.

During the twenty-four years of her literary productivity Miss Woolson's knowledge of many sections of the country furnished the inspiration to her active imagination. She was a pioneer in regional literature, writing local color stories depicting the mountain folk of Tennessee, the "backwater" life of Florida "swamp folks," and introducing Creole characters into her fiction. Maurice Francis Egan wrote in the *Catholic World* (February, 1887, page 709): "Miss Woolson is fond of contrasting the hard New England Puritan with Creole Catholic, and she succeeds very well in this." *Harper's* and *Putnam's Magazine* are the depositories of her earliest publications.

In the chapter, "Life and Work in Europe," Professor Kern traces the details of Old World influences on her writings from a series of intimate and valuable letters that reveal her "indefatigable energy." More than her stories these letters show the keenness of her critical ability. With a restrained intellectual and emotional curiosity she moved about Europe gathering experiences to be transmuted into her writings.

"Anne," her first novel, captivated readers in 1882. Snatches of autobiography are detectable in the narrative. With quick, sure strokes Miss Woolson describes Mackinac Island, and draws a dramatic group of characters to stimulate the reader who follows the development of Anne's character from girlhood to sterling womanhood. Père Michaux is a penetrating portrait study, and if his solution of the murder mystery is not in exact conformity to ordinary clerical procedure, his rôle as a detective is unique. The real name of this Catholic priest was André Désiré Joseph Piret. He abandoned a successful career as a professor at the University of Paris for the life of a missionary in Michigan, and was for many years parish priest at Mackinac Island.

From the point of view of art in fiction, "For the Major" (1883), her first novel of the South, is Miss Woolson's finest achievement. "Perhaps it is because 'For the Major' transcends the confinements of regionalism and achieves a universality of appeal undetermined by place or time that it occupies a position unique among the works of its author or of any other American writer."

Two groups of her short stories with Italian settings are available in book form: "The Front Yard and Other Italian Stories" and "Dorothy and Other Italian Stories." Collected into a volume after her death, the travel sketches of "Mentone, Cairo, and Corfu" describe some of the author's impressions and experiences in foreign lands.

This life will please readers of American literary biography. It is an adroit guide to an array of travel books, short stories, critical articles, and novels that even the casual reader of today will enjoy. For students of American literature the book is indispensable: it is based on full information scrupulously used.

DANIEL S. RANKIN.

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Briefer Mention

Literature of the Italian Renaissance, by Jefferson Butler Fletcher. New York: The Macmillan Company. $3.00.

A LIFETIME of concern with the Renaissance underlies Professor Fletcher's new book, which describes that "golden era" of Italian literature which extends from the lifetime of Dante to the heyday of Marino. The treatment is designed to provide the same sort of vulgarization which various European scholars have so effectively attempted. Perhaps the author is most skilful in passages outlining the philosophical texture of poetry. Few have dealt more understandingly with men like Benevieni, Poliziano and Sannazaro. One thinks Professor Fletcher less happy and original in the discussion of Machiavelli and similar personages. The book is written with charm and distinction; the occasional renderings of verse are remarkably good. A noticeable strain of anti-papal sentiment will strike many readers as amusing or exasperating, according to their mood. On the whole, this volume will be a valuable addition to the college reference library.

The Human Side of the News, by Edwin C. Hill. New York: Walter J. Black. $1.00.

THIS work by a recognized master of newspaper diction should form an accepted textbook in all English-speaking schools of journalism. Each story is a complete entity and they all carry memories of events and places that have passed before hurried eyes in the course of an ordinary lifetime. Mr. Hill's method of interpretation is the fine literary sauce that leavens the passing show. No longer in his first youth, he is as keen a worker as the newspaper profession can boast. Time has heightened his mental sensitivity to passing events. These he relates to a radio audience five days a week and is thus widely known for his knowledge and technique. This volume gives us a satisfactory collection of his writings.

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